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The Week-end Review

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The New Statesman and Nation—The Week-end Review. *Incorporating The New Statesman, The Nation and Athenaeum, Week-end Review.*

IF the Russian Pact had been signed and there had been a genuine will to create a Peace Front, the Poles would have been in a far stronger position to resist Nazi pressure on Danzig. That, presumably, is one reason for the long delays, not yet certainly fatal, in making the Russian Pact. Every Pole knows that if there is war Poland will be devastated. He knows, too, that to give way over Danzig means surrender to Germany. This in effect was admitted in Mr. Chamberlain's speech last week. He explained that Britain is certainly committed to fight if Germany seeks to destroy Polish independence, and his analysis of the Danzig situation made it clear that Danzig was vital to Polish trade and that the Germans had no grievances in the Free City, already under Nazi rule. A large-scale flight of bombers over France was staged to reinforce the lesson that Britain was serious this time. The Germans on their side are increasing military and naval preparations in the neighbourhood of Danzig and hope no doubt to produce a *fait accompli* which Britain and France would persuade the Poles to accept. These are extremely dangerous tactics, for though there may be elements in the Polish upper class disposed to capitulate, the Poles are a patriotic and even a bellicose people. No dramatic event is now expected until the British Parliament has risen; a new effort early in August to come to some kind of settlement is on the cards.

American Neutrality

For the time being the Senate isolationists have won the day. By the narrow margin of 12 votes against 11, the Foreign Relations Committee resolved on Tuesday not to proceed, this Session, with any neutrality legislation. In consequence, not merely is the Bloom Bill, permitting (in its amended form) sales to belligerents of "implements of war," temporarily pigeon-holed; the whole question of redefining America's policy in the event of war between other Powers is shelved. This is a serious reverse for the President. The position now is that the legislative embargo on shipments of munitions to belligerents—provided they are officially "observed" to be at war—is complete, since the "cash and carry" provisions which applied to commodities other than actual arms have expired. The Senate, however, has still to consider the Pittman Bill, which would empower the President to

restrict or prohibit sales of arms, steel or oil to any nation found to have violated in China the 1922 Nine-Power Treaty. If the Senate passes this measure, granting the President powers to intervene very effectively against Japan, its attitude of absolute, " no taking sides " neutrality in the event of treaty-breaking aggression in Europe will become strangely illogical.

Mystery in South Tirol

The Axis ramp in the South Tirol becomes " curiouser and curiouser." The latest development is a peremptory order to foreign residents to leave the Bolzano Province. Tourists—it appeared, from the answers given by the Italian Under-Secretary of State to the British Ambassador's inquiries on Tuesday—were expected to clear out in 48 hours. More permanent residents would be allowed a reasonable time to " settle their affairs "—though, according to the reports as we write, this is a euphemism for packing their clothes and putting a few hundred lire in their pockets. The foreign nationals who come under this ban are mainly British, French, Dutch and Swiss, the Swiss being by far the largest number. The Swiss Government have taken the lead in protesting against such a high-handed action, which they declare is a flagrant violation of the Italo-Swiss treaty. But the only reply vouchsafed so far by the Italian Government is that it is a measure of a " political and military character "—with a suggestion that these foreigners have been engaged in espionage. This mysterious business is susceptible of two explanations. It may well be that the Dictators do not want foreign witnesses of the " voluntary migration " of the Tirolese peasants—and of the measures taken to enforce this happy trek. It may have a good deal to do with the movements of troops, German troops, through the Brenner Pass into Italy—which it will be convenient to keep as secret as possible. Until we have evidence to the contrary, we may fairly assume that the Axis allies have both purposes in mind.

Japanese Defiance

The opening of the Tokio conference is still deferred—some say till next week, indefinitely according to others. Japan is now waiting, it is believed, to see how the Anglo-Soviet talks in Moscow turn out; the result may have a decisive effect on her own policy. Meanwhile there is little or no evidence of the supposed difference of opinion between the Government and the military hotheads, on which optimists here have built hopes. Colonel Spear, the British military attaché, is still a prisoner, threatened with a court-martial on some undefined charge; questions and protests by the Foreign Office are ignored. The situation at Tientsin shows no improvement. Outrages on British nationals continue; ships are held up; the Chinese are perpetually intimidated or incited to violence. From other Chinese centres, too, outrages are reported, and in Japan itself mob demonstrations are being instigated not merely by irresponsible persons or bodies, but by the big political parties. The Japanese press goes on drumming out its Anglophobe chorus—harping on the " new order in the East " and the demand that we shall abandon our " pro-Chiang Kai-shek policy." The result in this country is rather to turn people's attention to the absurd fact that the pluto democracies are actually making Japan's war possible by trading with her and supplying her with the raw materials of war. The most up-to-date and complete figures on this subject are now published in a pamphlet, *Who Arms Japan?* (published, price 3*d*., by the Union of Democratic Control, 34, Victoria Street, S.W.1). It clearly emerges that Japan's weak spot is her shortage of gold. It is within the power of Great Britain and the Dominions and the United States to bring Japan's war to a swift close. If Japanese goods were excluded from these markets, Japan would soon lose ability to import raw materials essential for her campaign.

Financing the Peace Front

In the provision of financial assistance to enable the junior members of the anti-aggression *bloc* to strengthen their defences, the British Government still seems inclined to spoil the ship for a ha'porth of tar. The Overseas Trade Guarantees Bill raises from £10 millions to £60 millions the limit of the export credits which the Board of Trade can grant for " political " purposes. The intention is apparently to extend credits up to fifteen years and to finance them by Treasury advances. The credits, in fact, will be indistinguishable from inter-governmental loans —with the single reservation that over two-thirds of the money must be spent in this country by the borrowers. To this proviso no exception can be taken. What is regrettable is the niggardly figure of the aggregate credits to be granted. Shared between Poland, Turkey, Rumania and Greece, £60 millions will not go far towards meeting urgent armaments needs. Moreover, all the countries whose integrity we have guaranteed require not merely arms but other manufactured goods. If Germany's economic penetration (pressed recently with increasing vigour in Rumania) is to be resisted, British credits on a much more impressive scale are essential.

Mr. Nash in the City

Unlike Daniel, Mr. Nash has been forced to spend many weeks in the lions' den, and last Wednesday he again postponed his departure. Unfortunately he is in the position of a Labour Finance minister whose whole plan of social reform depends upon the cordial co-operation of financiers solely concerned with the payment of their interest. His dilemma is that of our own Labour Government in 1931 and of the Popular Front in France; but he has faced it with more courage and skill, and it seems likely that he will obtain most of his immediate demands—on terms. These terms, however, are stringent. Mr. Nash has apparently got his £5,000,000 for defence, but a further export credit, which he vitally needs, has been made subject to his acceptance of Mr. Norman's conditions for the conversion of the £17,000,000 loan which matures on January 1st next. Mr. Norman wants to replace it with a short-term loan, with heavy interim repayments, designed to ensure that New Zealand's sterling resources are primarily devoted to external debt reduction. Mr. Nash has no alternative to acceptance of Mr. Norman's terms; but, if he does so, he must either cut down his imports and arouse the wrath of the F.B.I., or watch his social programme fall to pieces. Here the choice for a Labour Government seems easy. If Mr. Nash disregards hard cases among New Zealand importers and hard words from British exporters, and imposes a complete control

of imports, his brave social experiment will weather the storm.

Plutocracy and Poverty

Our plutodemocratic rulers are in no mood at present to pamper the poor. The Prime Minister has announced this week that there is no case for increasing the amount of old age pensions. There is, in fact, an overwhelming case, in the interests alike of the aged poor and of the State itself; and Mr. Chamberlain's arguments against it are specious—in particular the argument that *only about* 10 *per cent.* of the pensioners are forced to ask for poor relief to supplement their pensions. This week, too, a Standing Committee of the House of Commons has rejected a Labour demand for a £2 a week minimum wage for agricultural workers. No doubt such a wage (5*s.* or more above the average fixed by the Agricultural Wages Committees) would be a grave difficulty for the farmers in the present conditions of agriculture. But the answer to that is that the conditions of agriculture ought to be radically reformed. It is a scandal that hundreds of thousands of rural workers should be living on a wage so far below the "Human Needs Standard" which Mr. Seebohm Rowntree puts (for a man and wife and three children in the country) at about two guineas a week. Of course their position—and that of myriads of families in the towns as well—could be improved by a system of family allowances, for which there is an urgent need. This question was debated again on Wednesday in the House of Lords; but the Government have no intention whatever of introducing any such scheme. They are still pottering with plans for increasing the consumption of milk, but until they take far more effective steps for reducing its present monstrous price, the slogan "Drink more milk" will remain a mockery.

Birmingham Tenants' Victory

The first national convention of Tenants Associations which meets this week-end in Birmingham, will be a victory celebration. To the successes in Stepney must now be added a spectacular, and unexpected, triumph in Birmingham itself. There a strike, in which a large proportion of the 45,000 municipal tenants were engaged, ended last week in the indefinite postponement of the new rents scheme proposed by the Estates Committee and supported, at first wholeheartedly, by the Unionist caucus. This scheme for differential rents included a drastic means test and was to begin with an all-round increase of rents. The fate of the Labour majority in Leeds had proved already that even a humane attempt to vary rents according to the tenants' needs is difficult to apply, and the crude methods of Birmingham businessmen were bound to arouse a storm of opposition. But to make Empire House eat its own words is no inconsiderable feat, and the Birmingham tenants can be congratulated on giving the Unionists the first trouncing they have had for years. The Labour Party has actively supported them and should benefit considerably both in municipal and parliamentary elections.

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DOG EATS DOG

ON Monday the *Times* gave the place of honour to a letter by that veteran Liberal journalist, Mr. J. A. Spender. A stout supporter of Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Spender severely criticised Sir Archibald Sinclair, his party chief, for attacking the Prime Minister; he added that he deplored "the recent tendency of Liberal policy" under his leadership in the House of Commons. The letter was naturally seized upon by the opponents of the Liberal candidate who is contesting a by-election in North Cornwall, and numerous letters for and against Mr. Spender were dispatched to the *Times*. Of those supporting Sir Archibald Sinclair one was signed by a group of prominent Liberals including Lady Violet Bonham-Carter, Lady Gladstone, Mr. Comyns Carr, Mr. A. G. Gardiner, Sir Walter Layton, and Lord Meston. This letter was rejected by the *Times*; whereupon its authors promptly sent it to all the other London newspapers which, with the exception of the *Daily Herald* (which was too polite to mention the matter), published it with the information that the *Times* had refused to publish it. The *Daily Telegraph* took up the story with all the gusto of successful rivalry; a *Daily Express* leaderette on the subject displayed a certain pleasure in paying off old scores—it is not many days since the *Times* rebuked Lord Beaverbrook, it must be admitted with some justice, for "light-hearted" inaccuracy; while the Liberal papers, the *News-Chronicle* and the *Manchester Guardian*, naturally gave the story the fullest prominence. The only paper found to defend the *Times* was the *Daily Mail*, which could see no reason why a journal which supported Mr. Chamberlain should print a letter criticising him. The *Times* itself, uneasily aware that the letter would appear in other papers and repenting, we understand, of its mistake, took the unprecedented course of printing a severely expurgated form of the letter it had rejected, not as a letter addressed to the *Times*, but as a letter sent out generally to the press. The curious reader, puzzled by the unique spectacle of a letter printed in the correspondence columns of the *Times*, but not addressed to the editor, could, however, learn the explanation from another page of the *Times* itself where a report appeared of a speech by Sir Archibald Sinclair in which he told the story of the letter and its rejection.

Now why all this pother about a letter, one of scores rejected by the *Times* in common with every other newspaper every day? And why this spectacular departure by the whole press from the venerable Fleet Street principle that "dog does not eat dog"? The principle has solid reason behind it. Every paper receives far more letters than it can possibly print. The complications that would arise if newspapers all began to print each other's "rejects," with comments on each other's presumed motives, would be more amusing than useful. Letters must be selected and there are a dozen reasons for preferring one rather than another. Some are too libellous or too violent; others too trivial, too long or too boring. Several of the more popular papers make no effort at all to maintain serious correspondence, refusing, apparently on principle, to print letters criticising their policy or pointing out their more flagrant errors. They prefer their correspondents to discuss the proprieties of regulating bathing costumes or to ask whether red-haired men make good

fathers. Such papers do not at first seem in a strong position to criticise the *Times*. But in fact there were excellent reasons on this occasion for doing so.

The *Times* is a very high and mighty paper. It attempts to obtain a lien on the most important letters by always refusing any letter which is also sent to other papers. It claims for itself a peculiar and indefinable status as a national newspaper. Those who watch its policy and its selection of correspondence with a practised eye, know that, though its reporting remains of a very high standard, it is not objective, but in fact pursues a fiercely partisan policy. It is a not uncommon thing for the *Times* to give prominence to a highly damaging attack on an individual whom it wishes to discredit and then to reject his reply or to print it, sometimes after a lapse of time, in small print on an obscure page. Sometimes it is a cause rather than an individual it thus misrepresents. We recall among many other instances, the case of the Master of Balliol's electoral fight at Oxford, during which it published a letter by prominent University opponents of Dr. Lindsay and refused a reply signed by equally well-known Oxford men who supported him. The public rarely knows of these inequities, and the *Times* sails on with an aggravatingly sanctimonious air, damaging private reputations and national reputation all the more effectively because of the carefully sustained pretence that it is objective, comprehensive, and in some mysterious way, the voice of England. It in fact represents a small and increasingly discredited minority of the ruling class.

It should now be clear why this particular case of partiality was so willingly exposed by the newspapers. If you wear a top-hat, adopt a Pecksniffian manner and are accustomed to rebuke the misdemeanours of your contemporaries, you must expect a little malicious joy when you are yourself caught in the act of petty theft. On this occasion the *Times* was caught *in flagrante delicto*. Its own editorial explanation published on Thursday, does not pretend that this letter was too long or unimportant or libellous. The excuse put forward by the *Times* is that the pushing of Mr. Churchill's claims by his admirers (amongst whom the *Times* is apparently to be ranked) is really doing him "infinite harm." The plea does credit to the ingenuity of a leader-writer. The simple fact is that on every ground of common fairness the letter should have been printed as prominently as Mr. Spender's letter. An attack is made on the leader of a political party ; space is refused to influential supporters to speak their minds in his defence. One wonders further what possible justification the *Times* can claim for expurgating such a letter (when it finally printed it) without the permission of the signatories to do so. Even if it did believe that the signatories were not doing Mr. Churchill a good turn by pushing his claims, what right has the *Times* to delete the reference to him and why, even more strange, should it omit a passage which argued in mild terms that Sir Archibald Sinclair was within his rights in criticising the Prime Minister? The incident has at least this importance—that the public now knows that the correspondence columns of the *Times* are carefully selected and arranged with a view to producing a particular political impression, and that its partisanship is so gross that it will not even permit a discussion to appear in its columns of one of most hotly debated issues of domestic politics.

MOSCOW AT WORK

[FROM A CORRESPONDENT IN THE U.S.S.R.]

WHILE the Londoner and the Parisian devour the latest edition of the press to see whether or not the Three Power pact has at last been signed, arrange their air raid shelters, and prepare to evacuate their children to the country, the Muscovite is going about his business taciturn as usual. He seems to feel no more anxiety about a war than he has felt at any other time during the last ten years or so, and he shows no interest in the negotiations which are daily going on in the Kremlin between the representatives of Britain, France and the Soviet Union.

The Soviet press is very reserved in its discussions of the conversations. The item in *Pravda* for July 9th is typical—two lines in very small type at the bottom of page one :

> Yesterday the British Ambassador, M. Seeds, the French, Ambassador, M. Nagiar and M. Strang were received by Com. Molotov. The conversation lasted about two hours.

Occasionally in an editorial, or an article by some leading figure in the Government, a back-handed remark or two appear, like that of a few days ago by Zhdanov, the chairman of the foreign affairs committee of the Supreme Soviet. Zhdanov asserted that in his personal opinion, in which he was in disagreement with many of his friends, Britain and France did not want to conclude an equal pact with the Soviet Union. To those who are closely interested these articles throw some light on the conversations, but generally speaking Soviet citizens are almost unaware of the importance and content of the negotiations.

As for the war danger, the Muscovite has been hearing for fifteen years at least that the imperialists are planning an attack against the Soviet Union, and that the workers of the Socialist fatherland will have to defend the fruits of the October Revolution and the territory of the Union. There is nothing new for them in the present situation, except that some of the imperialists seem to be at least potential friends and allies of the Soviets.

A week ago I left Paris. A tight press censorship suppressed news of a further partial mobilisation carried out just before I left. Anyone who happened to be at the Gare de l'Est, however, could see the reservists leaving, bidding tearful farewell to wives and sweethearts. You could walk through the Samaritaine, the Louvre, or any other big department store in the middle of the afternoon and notice how greatly reduced were the number of customers. People with money enough to do so were moving their families out of the city, out of reach of enemy planes ; while those who could not afford this luxury tried on their new gas masks, and drew their savings out of the bank, just to be sure. Across the Rhine in Germany every third man was in uniform, and further off, in Poland, the entire population was ready for war at any hour.

But crossing over the barbed-wired border into the Soviet Union seemed like passing out of a war zone. No one was thinking of war. Everyone was busy working, living, trying to buy a new dress or a new suit of clothes, and studying to be engineers, dentists, and what not.

In the Hermitage the other night there was an open-air symphony concert. The orchestra played *Til Eugenspiegel* with great success, in spite of the present Nazi orientation of the composer. The audience, dressed in embroidered white linen shirts, discussed the harvest during the intermission, exchanged comments on the difficulty of obtaining railroad tickets to the holiday resorts on the Black Sea coast, told one another where there were a new lot of men's shoes for sale—but hardly a word about international politics or war. Of course, you can say that it is because they are not being told how serious the situation really is. To which the answer is that the leaders of the Soviet Union are inclined to think that there is not going to be a war right now, and see no reason for allowing anything in the nature of a war panic to start among the populace. However that may be, Soviet citizens are not

worrying much about war, and are busy working and living.

It is a year since I left Moscow the last time. The city has changed a good deal. The old "Tverskaya," now called Gorky Street, has been widened, and the buildings along it vastly improved, or completely reconstructed. The drive along the bank of the Moscow River, under the Kremlin wall, is finished; it is very attractively constructed and serves to speed up traffic through the centre of the town.

The streets are as crowded as ever. Moscow was built for a million inhabitants, and there are now nearly four million. People are still shoddily dressed as compared with Western Europe, but the year has brought some improvement. The demand for dry goods of all kinds is even greater than it was a year ago. There are lines blocks long, kept in order by squads of militiamen, waiting to buy cotton yard goods and finished clothes. The demand so far exceeds the supply, which results in increased prices in spite of economic planning. Men's suits, for example, are almost unobtainable, and cost somewhere between 500 and 1,000 roubles, which is two to four times the average worker's monthly wage in the Soviet Union as a whole.

The political temper of the population has changed a good deal during the year. The purge is over. The subtle fear, the suspicion which was so noticeable a year ago, has largely disappeared. Arrests are infrequent, and numbers of previously arrested men and women have been released. Yezhov, the erstwhile "iron commissar," who executed the purge, has been forgotten. His name is never mentioned by the press. The population has largely come to the conclusion that the excesses and mistakes of the purge were the fault of Yezhov personally, and of several of his subordinates, who have likewise been removed, but that the struggle against real spies and enemies of the people has been carried on, and is still being carried on, by the Central Committee of the Party under the leadership of Stalin.

The personal eulogies of Stalin and other members of the Politburo have become much less frequent during the year.

In the sphere of the national economy a number of measures have been adopted to tighten control over the working population and increase efficiency. In agriculture, for instance, the individual plots of the collective farmers have been reduced, thus making it impossible for them to escape taxation by spending all their time on their own individual plots while creating an artificial shortage of labour on the collective farms. In industry a series of decrees, designed to increase the productivity of labour, has stiffened discipline and made unpunctuality at work almost a crime.

On buttonholing a few old acquaintances in Moscow and asking them about a war, and what it would mean to the Soviet Union, I found a unanimous confidence that the Red Army can defend the Union against the attacks of any combinations of enemies, and furthermore, if need be, fight successfully on someone else's territory in fulfilment of the treaty obligations of the Union. This confidence is not without a sound basis. Since I first came to the Soviet Union in 1932, the average daily production of pig iron has tripled, and other industrial indices have increased proportionately. Roads have been built, railroad lines have been double and triple tracked, and industry has turned out the necessary machines for a first-class mechanised army.

Organisation has improved noticeably even since last year, while in Germany there is a movement in the other direction. I travelled in Germany a good deal last winter, and was rarely on a train which ran on time. Difficulties in food supply and distribution in Germany are well known. Soviet trains, on the other hand, are running on time; food distribution is pretty well organised and the supply adequate.

I am convinced that in spite of its profound distrust of the Chamberlain Government, the Kremlin is anxious to sign a Three-Power pact if some fair and equal agreement can be reached, in the interests of that which is more important than anything else to the Soviet Union—preservation of peace. But they are in no hurry, nor are they giving the matter much publicity at home. Such publicity would serve no good purpose. In Britain it is a different matter. There news that the negotiations are protracted serves to weaken Chamberlain's position; this meets with no objection from the Kremlin, and may even be a reason for dragging the conversations out longer than would seem necessary.

Moscow, 10 July, 1939.

HITLER'S WAR PLANS

[Dr. Otto Strasser, the author of this article, and his brother, Gregor Strasser, who was murdered on June 30th, 1934, were among the most prominent of the Left Wing Nazis, until Otto quarrelled with Hitler in 1930, and his brother became involved in intrigues with General von Schleicher in 1932 and was dismissed from his offices in the party. Otto Strasser was a Social-Democrat until 1923, when, despairing of the Party as a revolutionary force, he resigned. In 1926 he joined the Nazis and soon became one of their most prominent publicists. When Hitler began his close collaboration with Hugenburg and the industrialists, Strasser became dubious of his sincerity and asked him to explain his attitude to Socialism. After discussion lasting all day, Strasser resigned and tried to form a new militant National Socialist party, but with small success. The record of this discussion, published under the title *Ministersessel oder Revolution?* has become a *locus classicus* for Hitler's philosophy and political tactics. Strasser is now living in exile, but still retains the closest contacts with Germany.—ED. *N.S.&N.*]

THE political situation at the beginning of the month of July, 1939, is dominated by the fear that the "Danzig problem" may be the starting point of another world war. If we examine the grounds for this fear the following three facts are apparent:

(1) In his speech in the Reichstag on April 28th, 1939, Hitler declared his irrevocable determination to reincorporate Danzig in the Reich (and thereby to settle the "Corridor" question). This determination has been repeated and stressed in the speeches of German ministers and Party leaders. Only the moment has not been decided; there is no doubt about the intention.

(2) According to the declarations of Polish ministers—in particular the speech of the Foreign Minister, Beck, in the Sejm and the broadcast of President Moscicki on Naval Day—Poland will resist the reincorporation of Danzig in the Reich with all her forces.

(3) In view of the terms of the British-Polish guarantee and the Franco-Polish pact, and taking into account the declarations of the British and French Governments—especially those of M. Daladier and Lord Halifax—there is no doubt that armed resistance on the part of Poland would be the signal for military help from France and England and therefore for general European war.

It is obvious that there can be no alteration of the first factor without considerable damage to Hitler's prestige and therefore to his power; and there can be no alteration of the third factor without very great harm to the reputation of England and France in the eyes of the world. Therefore the only slender possibility of peace depends on Poland giving in. The example of Prague has taught us that this kind of suicide (suicide from fear of death) is not impossible. It seems, however, very improbable that Poland will yield, in view of the character of the Polish people and of the Polish Government, and, above all, because of the promise of international support. This means quite simply that a European war is almost inevitable (and it would quickly develop into a new world war).

Before attempting any further analysis, it must be realised that the foreign policy of the Western Powers has given Hitler two strong trump cards—the opportunity to decide the place and the moment. The first is an inestimable advantage for him, for the mentality of the German people demands an excuse for war which will quickly "catch on." This is especially the case with Danzig, though an attack on Prague would have had a different effect. A war against Poland would be just as popular as a war on Italy's behalf—possibly against Albania—would have been unpopular. The Governments in

Paris and London seem to ignore the great political advantage that this choice of ground gives to Hitler, but their General Staffs can have no doubt about the much greater advantage he will have if the choice of the moment to strike is left to him.

These important initial advantages must not be forgotten when we consider the further development of Hitler's political and military operations. According to certain reports, Hitler will make a great effort—in the case of Polish resistance to the "settlement" of the Danzig and the Corridor question—to smash Poland completely within three weeks. The German General Staff hope that they will be able to effect this by a concentrated attack by four German armies at once. The first army will march from the Vienna-Mährisch-Ostrau area, to Krakow; the second from the Dresden-Breslau area to Lodz; the third from the Berlin-Frankfurt on Oder area to Posen; and the fourth, somewhat later, from East Prussia to Warsaw. This should result in a Polish Cannae at Warsaw, and if, all goes well, in the complete destruction of the Polish army or, at the very least, the conquest of the industrial areas of Poland and the occupation of the Narew-Vistula-San line for the Germans. In view of the very great superiority of the German forces, especially in the air, and the impossibility of any effective help arriving immediately from England and France (or from Russia, whose offensive powers are weak just as her defensive powers are strong), it can be assumed that at least some of the hopes of the German General Staff will be fulfilled.

Hitler then intends to make the Western Powers an offer of a 50 years peace pact, in return for the Polish districts of Danzig, the Corridor, and parts of Posen and Upper Silesia, and the "peaceful" settlement of German and Italian claims in Africa. Hitler is here reckoning on the love of peace in the nations, the fear of revolution in the hearts of their leaders, and finally on the difference between the "defence" of Poland and the "reincorporation" of Poland.

If these hopes of Hitler are fulfilled—and we have not forgotten that his hopes for the occupation of the Rhineland, the occupation of Vienna, the destruction of Czechoslovakia and the annexation of Prague, have all been fulfilled—he will be master in Europe and a "rounding off" in Africa will be a certain consequence. His strategic position, flanked by Mussolini and Franco, would be so overwhelmingly strong that Nazi acquisition of the heritage of England and France would be accomplished simply through union with the Axis Powers. As this is doubtless realised in Paris and London, the German General Staff, unlike Hitler, are reckoning on a rejection of this peace proposal by the Western Powers, and also on a rejection by Russia of the plans to be submitted to her for the breaking up of Poland.

This is a situation that might be called "Hitler's Battle of the Marne." The war, beginning with a conflict between Germany and Poland, will develop into a European war and then into a world war. Italy will take Corsica with a lightning stroke, a German-Italian army will march against Egypt and the Sudan in order to gain possession of the Suez Canal, while at the same time Spain will demand the surrender of Gibraltar, and the Mediterranean will be closed at both ends by the Axis Powers. Germany will try to get past the Maginot Line, threaten England directly from Holland, and thus force the acceptance of every "peaceful" proposal that she makes after the conquest of Warsaw.

This, according to all reports from Berlin, is an approximate outline of the plan, which provides further for the occupation of Denmark and Rumania for economic reasons, and for the instigation of a revolt among the Arabs and Indians; it is hoped that Russia will be held in check by Japan.

It is useless to speculate further. According to Clausewitz, only the beginning of a war is known to us; this is even more true to-day when the internal situation may spring great surprises on us. The German opponents of the Hitler regime see in this the deciding factor in the future and the main objective of their work. Because they consider the downfall of Hitler without war to be a sheer illusion in view of the present material and pyschological situation in Germany, they consider it all the more necessary to precipitate a war as soon as possible to save Germany and Europe from destruction.

At the very moment when Hitler's hopes of a "local war" can no longer be fulfilled, when the German General Staff begin to realise that they are in the same position as Ludendorff after the defeat of Russia—a position that made tactical results possible but involved a strategical final defeat; when the German people begin to realise that Hitler brings not peace, but a destruction which takes the form of terrible air raids day and night—at this moment the fruits of years of work by the opposition will suddenly mature and a state of revolution will suddenly develop in Germany. The sooner this happens, and the sooner the German people embark on a course of peace policy under new leadership, the greater is the certainty that the war will be quickly and completely ended, before chaos spreads over Germany and Europe.

OTTO STRASSER

A LONDON DIARY

LIVING in London where growlings from the Stock Exchange echo through the floors of taxi-cabs, publishers threaten suicide and the big West End stores are draughty with *Lebensraum*, one may get a quite false idea of the crisis. I had not fully realised until I read our Financial Supplement this week what a very odd kind of crisis it is—a slump of unprecedented dimensions in the City and a boom in industry at the same time—in fact, as someone has said, a regular gloom. In the provinces there is no real war scare; employment is rising steadily and overtime is abundant. For those who depend on armaments and their subsidiaries things are better than at any time since the last war, and there is the added advantage that no one is being killed. In fact everything the Socialist has said about unemployment is quite true—that prosperity could be had from State expenditure and a planned economy. Only, of course, Governments would not listen to interference in private enterprise for productive expenditure; it is quite different when it's a question of tanks and guns and bombing aeroplanes.

* * *

Discussing Havelock Ellis with some friends to-day, I was surprised when one of them said that he believed Ellis's influence to have been as great as that of Bernard Shaw. My friend was not talking about his technical books on sex psychology, about which there was all the silly controversy. They can, of course, be used for obscenity just as any medical case histories can if they deal with subjects not usually discussed. No, it was through his early literary works, *The New Spirit* and others, that he exercised his chief influence, a clear and strong current in the broad stream which we mainly associate with Ibsen, Walt Whitman, Carpenter, Shaw, and the rest. One of my favourite books is his work on Spain. Everything that I have read of Ellis's has the same quality, a direct and serious and very human understanding; just because there was no play-acting about Havelock Ellis his writing had no back-wash. It was a steady influence which has been largely forgotten to-day because his ideas have been so largely accepted and absorbed.

* * *

The debate on the War Office circular about International Brigaders in the Regular Army and the Territorials was another example of the topsy-turviness of politics to-day. Here was Mr. Gallacher, as the I.L.P. members were quick to point out, complaining that his comrades are being debarred from service in a capitalist army, and Sir Victor Warrender explaining why the only Englishmen who have fought in modern conditions and risked their lives for democracy have to be carefully looked over before they are allowed to fight for England. Sir Victor admitted that a secret circular had been sent and justified it by stating that the British members of the Brigade were "put through a very intensive course of Communist revolutionary propaganda while in Spain." He wanted International Brigaders as long as they did not spread

this propaganda in the army, and stated that only five had been rejected or discharged " because they were not of sufficiently good character." It is all a little puzzling. Communist propaganda to-day consists of incitements to defend democracy against Fascism, and the Government are supposed to be seeking an alliance with Communist Russia. Does Sir Victor feel that fervent anti-Fascism is a sign of bad character? Or is it that belief in democracy is all right anywhere except in the army which is to defend it. I wonder whether Fascists and notorious Russophobes are also rejected because of their subversive influence? Hardly, for they are mostly officers and gentlemen with a right to their own opinions.

* * *

The Annual Congress of the National Peace Council, which met last week-end, was distinguished by a new feature, the emergence of Federal Union. This was represented by the Chairman, C. E. M. Joad, as being the next step in the development of the policy which the Council has been following for the past nine months—the policy of a World Peace Conference to remove barriers to trade, administer undeveloped territories under international mandate, and generally to deal with the economic causes of war—and was supported in an exciting speech by Senor Madariaga, who said what he had to say with such excessive brilliance that I doubt if many of the audience could have told us afterwards what it was. The reactions of the Congress were interesting. Federal Union is liked neither by the pacifists nor by the upholders of the Peace bloc. The pacifists see in it just another attempt to divide the world into two groups, the virtuous democracies inside Union and the wicked dictatorships outside, and jib at the obvious necessity of defending the Union by force, if it is attacked. Some upholders of the Peace bloc who smell crypto-Fascism everywhere, are inclined at the moment to suspect another attempt by Hitler's Fifth Column to divert men of good will from the necessary task of resisting aggression, and take exception to any proposal for a Union which does not include Soviet Russia. Many indeed diagnose the whole Federal proposal as another capitalist plot against the U.S.S.R. These dark doubts are, I suspect, partly a rationalisation of the instinctive hostility of two groups who have squatted and quarrelled for so long upon the public ear of the Congress, that they not unnaturally resent a third party staking out a claim upon such valuable property. But I doubt whether they will arrest the growth of the Union idea, which, though it can be used in an escapist way, does contain a vital idea.

* * *

I am extremely sorry to see that the current number of *Fact* is entitled " Our Last Number." There have been twenty-seven of these monographs issued at 6*d*., and I see that over 200,000 have been sold in all. They were selected by a variegated Board of Editors, which included Lansbury, Wells, Spender, Needham, Leonard Barnes, Mrs. Cole and others; and some of them (such as Professor Clark's essay on patent medicines, an analysis of the New Deal, and a history of negro revolt) covered subjects on which there is no other tolerable study at all. Others like Herbert Hodge's " I Drive a Taxi " and B. L. Coombes' " I am a Miner " are brilliant examples of what Soviet critics call " worker-autobiographies." The general editor claims that the average length of a *Fact* (20 to 30,000 words) was one which was the optimum for studies such as Tom Wintringham's on army reform, though the British book trade will not handle it. It is too long for a magazine article and usually has to be puffed and padded out into a 7*s*. 6*d*. book. The *Fact* length is just about what an ordinary man can read and grasp in one sitting. To publish readable and serious studies of this length at sixpence was a good idea, and I expect it will be revived.

* * *

People who have been near the throne in Germany lately tell me that the atmosphere of Berchtesgaden is becoming reminiscent of the Court of Louis XI or of the Tsar's palace at the time of Rasputin. Hitler has always consulted astrologers. Their number I am told has increased and there is a whole ritual of mystery, necromancy and numerology. The cult of astrology is on the up-grade here too, along with other sheer irrationalities. I do not imagine that Mr. Chamberlain is superstitious, but, since his Cardiff speech, our Sunday astrologers have been assuming that he is. Their evidence is a passage in which, discussing whether we cannot look to the future with any confidence, he said: " If you really ask me whether things will be better in the autumn, I can only tell you to consult Old Moore. For he is quite as likely to be right as I should be." This sensible comment was specially picked out in the *Sunday Dispatch*, and Old Moore, who contributes a weekly prognostication to this paper, was beside himself with joy, and soon all the newspaper astrologers, headed by the *People*, had joined in. Old Moore's stock has shot up. His prophecy that Japan will be out of China before the year is out, and that Colonel Beck will be Hitler's master, has brought relief to thousands, now that it is thought to have the Premier's approval. It is impossible to overlook the growth of these superstitions in the last few years. The regular doses in the Beaverbrook press are proof enough of the popular demand, and now the B.B.C. has sold the pass by allowing talks on Capricorn, Saturn and the influence of the stars. I don't suppose that either Mr. Ogilvie, who is a very sensible person, or Lord Beaverbrook, who is a very shrewd one, believes in astrological prognostications, but I cannot see why they should not be prosecuted under the same law which enables the police to haul up obscure clairvoyants or tea-cup readers. The usual charge is that of obtaining money by pretending to prognosticate the future. Now the B.B.C. get 10*s*. a year out of me, and the *Sunday Express* costs 2*d*.

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to M.R.

All cuttings should be addressed to " This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

Dr. Edmund Distin Maddick, who eight years ago erected a 40ft. white stone mausoleum surmounted by a marble statue of Christ and a little child in Norwood Cemetery, was buried there at noon to-day. Dr. Maddick, who had a distinguished career, was a man of deep religious feeling. Tattooed in colours on his chest was a representation of the Crucifixion.—*Evening Standard.*

" I suffered badly from sleeplessness until I read somewhere that if the shoes one has worn during the day are put under the foot of the bed on retiring to rest, sleep and a good night's rest will be assured. But it is the position in which the shoes are placed which counts. They should be placed side by side, heel to toe," and she sent a tiny sketch to illustrate, showing them placed alternate fashion. " I have tried it many times," she adds, " and have recommended it to friends and in every case it has produced the required sleep."—*Women's Friend.*

The Post Office (who in 1924 accepted a radiotelegram addressed to Mars and charged 1*s*. 6*d*. a word for it although it was marked " Delivery not guaranteed ") told me yesterday they would discourage any further attempts to use Rugby Radio for talking to Mars.

" Our Telecommunications Department is not in touch with any planet," said an official.—*News Chronicle.*

Required by Memsahib, Lucky Tiger-Bone, mounted or unmounted.—Advt. in *Daily Telegraph.*

" I don't mind whether it's a boy or a girl. But what I would really like is twins—one of each sex. My ambition is to have a large family.

" Now babies are all the fashion. In fact, everyone seems to be having a baby, and I'm wondering whether I've started a new craze."—Miss Florence Desmond, quoted in *Sunday Chronicle and Sunday Referee.*

NATIONALISATION OF CIVIL AVIATION

ALTHOUGH the main criticism of the Government's present proposals to merge the two subsidised air transport companies into a public corporation centres round excessive compensation, other matters of principle regarding public ownership are involved. Scandalous as is the price being paid for the shares of both Imperial and British Airways, this is only what was to be expected from a Government which legislates and administers in the interests of private capital. It means that the subsidy must be permanently higher by the interest payable on the excess compensation of about a million pounds which shareholders are to receive.

What is unexpected is that in the proposed set-up of the new corporation there is a return to that particular form of public ownership which it has become fashionable to deprecate, namely Treasury control. Post-war experimentation in nationalisation has turned full circle with a return to this type of direct control that the public corporation was devised to circumvent. Farthest from old-fashioned nationalisation was London Transport carrying no Treasury control or Parliamentary responsibility. Nearest to it will be British Overseas Airways Corporation with responsibility to a Secretary of State for Air exercising considerable powers over it and with a budget subject to Treasury approval. This does not represent a conversion to socialism on the part of the National Government, but a breakdown in indirect control and a realisation that civil aviation must always be dependent on government aid for development and operation. Nor does it mean that the proposed constitution of this latest recruit to post-war public corporations is above criticism. Far from it. There are a number of grave defects which should be remedied before the Bill becomes law. The Board is to be appointed by the Minister. This is as it should be and follows the original proposals for London Transport which, if followed, might have enabled its subsequent financial troubles to be more easily remedied, and with less hardship to the travelling public. The Board of the new corporation is unnecessarily large; it is to consist of from 9 to 15 members, and a Chairman and Deputy-Chairman to be named by the Minister. In an attempt to preserve independence and commercial business efficiency the chief executive is to be appointed by the Board and not by the Minister. He will, no doubt, be Mr. Walter Leslie Runciman. While the fees of the Chairman, Deputy-Chairman and Board are to be decided upon by the Minister in consultation with the Treasury those of the Chief Executive are not.

As regards members of the Board the Bill is silent on their qualifications. This is a serious omission. No attempt is made to create a full time highly qualified Board, corresponding in calibre and morale to the permanent civil service. The success or failure of a public corporation turns upon the personnel of its directing heads. In criticising the Imperial Airways Board the Cadman report recommended the appointment of a full time Chairman, and Sir John Reith was given the job. B.A.O.C. should have a full time Board free from all commercial interests. It is provided that members of the Board shall not hold office in any similar undertakings, but the holding of other directorships is not excluded. In the past a Government directorship has been the signal for the receipt of commercial directorships in other companies. Those appointed have often been retired civil servants, whose fees are a useful pension supplement, ex-Cabinet Ministers and party politicians. Where commercially experienced ex-capitalists are chosen they generally serve upon a number of other boards also. Even Lord Ashfield, with his £12,500 a year from London Transport is a Director of the Midland Bank and a handful of companies. Return to Treasury control should be linked with the standard and tradition of the civil service. Those who are to manage the corporation should be excluded from holding seats on the boards of any other than allied or associated concerns. As no such provision is made it looks as though the airways corporation board is to be composed of Sir John Reith and ex-directors of the existing companies, and membership will be incidental to other jobs. Public ownership should rise above the capitalist conception that commercial and financial administration can be efficiently done by a Board meeting round a table once every so often.

Treasury control is to be exercised in a number of ways, but mainly through budgetting. After an initial period during which deficits are to be made up, the corporation is to submit estimates for three-year periods to the Secretary of State for Air and they can only be approved by him after Treasury consent has been obtained. There can be no departure from this budget without the consent of the Minister and the Treasury, but there can be supplementary estimates. Similarly, services to be operated are subject to the direct control of the Minister. Once undertaken they cannot be discontinued without his consent, and his approval is required before new services can be undertaken, and he can order new services to be started or old ones to be discontinued. The amount of subsidy will be in accordance with this budget representing in effect the difference between income and expenditure. A maximum of £4 millions is fixed, which is approximately £1 million more than at present. The Board will have the further financial advantage of having both the principal and interest of its capital stock guaranteed by the Treasury. Its initial capital is to be £7 millions and the maximum is £10 millions. Any surplus is to go to build up a reserve fund, but once that equals ten per cent. of the cost of the Corporation's assets a half is to be returned to the State.

This financial control combined with the appointment of the Board by the Minister, gives a considerable amount of public accountability. It is important inasmuch as it finally recognises the need for public control of public expenditure. Previously the doling out of subsidies has not as a rule carried control of their expenditure. This principle should be applied with equal force to all subsidised industries—shipping, for example.

Although in these ways the B.A.O.C. comes into such close relationship with the Government it is not entirely a State monopoly. In fact one of the grave defects of the Bill is that it does not provide for the taking over of internal air lines, which are separately subsidised. The Air Minister can consent to the Corporation running internal services, but he has made it clear he does not intend to do so. As far as external services are concerned, the Government undertakes not to subsidise any other corporation, but would this allow non-subsidised competitors to spring up? If so, it leaves the danger of competing companies skimming the cream from the most remunerative routes. They would be in the advantageous position of not being subject to the same restrictions as the subsidised corporation, particularly as regards using British machines only. The case of British Airways could easily be repeated. Imperial Airways on its formation in 1923 received a ten-year monopoly. On expiry of that period a number of small companies started on the short European routes which are the only profitable services, and when they amalgamated into British Airways, cut seriously into Imperial Airways Paris traffic. They were able to do so as they could use fast American machines, which made those of Imperial Airways (restricted to using British machines only) look obsolete. Later British Airways was given a subsidy and the value that this State assistance created is now being compensated. Monopoly is not necessarily desirable, but one of the main reasons for the new corporation is the need to concentrate British air transport under centralised administration and government control. Without monopoly unnecessary and wasteful competition on profitable routes might arise. From monopoly there need be no great danger as there will always be more than enough competition from the heavily subsidised foreign lines which operate on practically all routes flown by British planes to-day. It will continue as the Bill

specifically provides that the corporation cannot enter into pooling arrangements with any other companies or accept payments from foreign governments. Why this nationalism? Civil aviation can only be fully developed when it is inter-nationalised.

The nationalisation of civil aviation should have come long ago. Years have been wasted in subsidising private enterprise in the hope that ultimately air transport would thrive without State aid. But its development is essential irrespective of profitability. In fact, the troubles that overtook Imperial Airways arose from this confusion between the strategic development of air communications and the attempt to make civil aviation profitable enough to be free of subsidies. If the one is to be successfully carried out the other is impossible. Imperial Airways did neither. It built up a fine net-work of Empire airways and established the all-up mail service (for which it is handsomely paid by the Post Office) but it neglected the European routes, partly because of the failure of aircraft manufacturers to supply machines. The possibility of becoming self-supporting receded as competition from heavily-subsidised foreign lines increased. Without financial success it could not raise capital required in large amounts for that development necessary to fulfil the first objective. In an attempt to do so it paid high dividends out of its subsidy and thereby created a false picture of its financial strength which led to inflated values for its shares. For the value so created through Government aid shareholders receive generous compensation. This attempt to be commercially successful conflicted with the Government idea of development and was the main cause of the criticism of the Cadman report. The company was less to blame than the Government as Imperial Airways was but operating in accordance with the recommendations of the Hambling report on Civil Air subsidies submitted in 1923. That report recommended that any subsidised company should be run on business lines and free from Government interference. Fifteen years later the Cadman report criticised Imperial Airways for taking a commercial view of its responsibilities and for failing to co-operate with the Government departments. With this conflict of views no wonder Imperial Airways did not know where it stood. Certainly Government interference was at a minimum, being limited to the appointment of two directors to the Board, whose responsibilities were undefined. In fact they were often chosen from the ranks of successful industrialists. This lack of contact between the Air Ministry and Imperial Airways led the Cadman Committee to recommend a full-time Chairman. Within nine months of taking the job Sir John Reith had to inform shareholders that the recommendations of the Cadman report were being thrown overboard and a public corporation was to be formed. It is clear he found any compromise between public ownership and control and private enterprise unworkable. Now public ownership is to be tried. It can only succeed if there is a complete break away from the capitalist attachments of the acquired companies and if the new corporation is directed by public servants as a public utility in the spirit of service to the State.

ERNEST DAVIES

SNOBS

A HASTINGS town councillor has been complaining rather bitterly that up to the present "the predominating principle behind the election of the mayor [of Hastings] has been colossal snobbery." In order to get rid of this, he suggested a plan by which the mayoralty of the borough would be offered to the oldest serving councillor. (Incidentally, he himself is said to be the oldest serving councillor.) He "got this brain-wave," he declared, from reading about the election of a man in the fried-fish trade to the mayoralty of another town. "I am," he went on vigorously, "as good as any other man, no matter whether he wears a frock coat, drives about in a limousine, and has a large house and plenty of money."

I had never before thought of snobbery as something that affected the choice of mayors. Few of the mayors I have seen looked as if they would make much appeal to snobs. Yet snobbery is obviously a relative matter, and it may be possible that men who become mayors are in their old world the objects of as much undeserved deference as dukes in theirs. Snobbery needs no upper classes in order to flourish. Little towns that do not possess even a baronet on the roll of their citizens are said to be full of it. "This town," said a man to me once of the town in which he lived, "is rotten with snobbery. Twopence looks down on three-halfpence, and three-halfpence on a penny." There were snobs, for example, who regarded it as rather disgraceful to earn a living in some different trade from their own. At least, their wives were of this way of thinking. The draper's wife hesitated to admit the publican's daughter to her social circle, even though they both went to the same church. On the other hand, the farmer's wife, living a few miles away, was horrified to hear that a farmer in the neighbourhood had married the daughter of a draper. The caste system is full of curious distinctions of this kind. Why, for example, has a brewer always been considered more of a gentleman than a publican, and a manufacturer than a shopkeeper?

It cannot be entirely because the brewer and the manufacturer are more closely associated with wealth than the others. In Victorian days, many an honest snob would have objected to his son's marrying the daughter of a publican, even if she had been endowed with a fortune, and the daughter of a millionaire shopkeeper would have been similarly frowned on in many a county family as an unsuitable bride for a member of its circle. Nor can the distinction between the brewer and the manufacturer, on the one hand, and the publican and the shopkeeper, on the other, be attributed to a feeling that, after all, the first two are engaged in the worthy work of making things, whereas the other two are middlemen, who merely sell them. Otherwise, the stockbroker and the wine-merchant would have a much lower place than they have on the ladder of caste.

How far distinctions of this kind still exist I do not know. But, even if they have disappeared, I have no doubt that other distinctions equally curious have succeeded them. For, until men are perfect, there will always be unworthy deference on the part of some people and unjustified condescension on the part of others. It is this condescension, it seems to me, that is the worst element in snobbery. I can forgive one class for looking up to another class admiringly; but I find it hard to forgive one class for looking down on another class. To feel that a man who is richer than yourself is your superior is to experience an emotion with some warmth in it: to feel that a man who is poorer than yourself is your inferior is the result of mere unimaginativeness. That is why I think the rich snobs and the snobs in high society are worse snobs than the poor snobs and the snobs in low society.

As a rule, we think of the snob as a man who is chiefly engaged in looking up. But the man who looks down on his neighbours for the wrong reasons, it seems to me, has the same snobbish outlook on life as the man who looks up to his neighbours for the wrong reasons. The snob has been defined as a man who admires mean things meanly; and, if a rich man feels himself superior to other men because of his riches, he is, under this definition, clearly a snob, for he admires himself meanly. If the rich man's daughters are snobs, they are even worse snobs, for they admire themselves without having even the credit of having made the money that is their chief—perhaps, their only—claim to admiration. But even the richest snob, it must be allowed, usually looks up to somebody or other, if only to a duke. He, too, has his moments of warmth of heart.

I sometimes wonder whether we are justified in thinking of snobs exclusively as people who look up in a rather flunkeyish way to wealth, position and titles. Why should we think it more snobbish to admire and defer to a man because he is rich then to admire and defer to a woman because she is beautiful? Why should it be esteemed more snobbish to feel humble in the presence of a peer than to feel humble

in the presence of a great cricketer? It may be replied that to admire beauty is a noble emotion, to admire riches an ignoble emotion, and, again, that admiration of an empty title is not to be compared with admiration of genius, even if it is only genius in sport. At the same time, the man who takes pleasure in being seen in the company of a beautiful woman shares a good many of the emotions of the man who takes pleasure in being seen in the company of a millionaire. And I cannot see why I should be forgiven for remembering with pleasure speaking to Mr. Jack Hobbs and condemned for remembering with pleasure talking to a marquis. After all, the rich man and the marquis are impersonations of success, sometimes hereditary, no less than the beautiful woman and the great cricketer. And beauty and genius at games, like riches and titles, are often hereditary. It seems to me that there is an element of snobbishness, usually harmless, in most of our admiration of other people. It is a tribute paid to people whose success makes our world more exciting.

Snobbery becomes a vice only when we treat with conspicuous difference the successful and the comparatively unsuccessful people we meet. If a man, sitting between a beautiful woman and a plain woman at dinner, devotes himself entirely to talking to the beautiful woman and ignores the plain woman, he would to my mind be as much a snob as if he behaved in the same way to a marchioness and a woman who was a Nobody. Again, imagine a policeman who, having pulled up a motorist and rated him roughly for not having obeyed a signal, discovered that he was an earl, immediately addressed him in a changed tone and voice, and obsequiously made way for him to pass: that policeman would undoubtedly be a snob of a bad kind. Suppose, however, that he found that the offending motorist was—I use the name only for the purpose of illustration—Hutton of Yorkshire, and suppose he behaved towards Hutton with similar obsequiousness: would not that equally be evidence of snobbery? Your answer will probably depend on whether you love cricket more than titles.

Titles, however, do unquestionably beget an exceptional amount of snobbery. I should be in favour of abolishing them, if it were certain that their disappearance would not be followed by a revival of snobbery in other forms. I once knew a youth who became reverential when he was talking to any one who had passed the examination for the degree of Bachelor of Arts. We needs must love the highest when we see it. And the highest will be for one man wealth, for another imaginary learning; for one man birth, for another genius in literature or genius in football. All "fans" are a sort of snobs: did some of them not knock Toscannini over the other day in a railway station in order to get a closer view of a film-star?

If the councillors of Hastings are snobs—and I do not say that they are—it must be because "the highest" to them is money rather than poetry or acting on the films. In this preference I think they will have the sympathy of the vast majority of the grown-up inhabitants of these islands, I sometimes wonder why no nation has a religion according to which Plutus has dethroned Zeus. How honest the Israelites were in their worship of the Golden Calf! How honest we should be if we set up a replica of it in every town and village!

Y. Y.

Miscellany

NOT LOOKING AT ART

PICTURES are not easy to look at. They generate private fantasies, they furnish material for jokes, they recall scraps of historical knowledge, they show landscapes where one would like to wander and human beings whom one would like to resemble or adore, but looking at them is another matter, yet they must have been painted to be looked at. They were intended to appeal to the eye, but almost as if it were gazing at the sun itself the eye often reacts by closing as soon as it catches sight of them. The mind takes charge instead and goes off on some alien vision. The mind has such a congenial time that it forgets what set it going. Van Gogh and Corot and Michelangelo are three different painters, but if the mind is indisciplined and uncontrolled by the eye, they may all three induce the same mood, we may take just the same course through dreamland or funland from them, each time, and never experience anything new.

I am bad at looking at pictures myself, and the late Roger Fry enjoyed going to a gallery with me now and then, for this very reason. He found it an amusing change to be with someone who scarcely ever saw what the painter had painted. "Tell me, why do you like this, why do you prefer it to that?" he would ask, and listen agape for the ridiculous answer. One day we looked at a fifteenth-century Italian predella, where a St. George was engaged in spearing a dragon of the plesiosaurus type. I laughed. "Now, *what* is there funny in this?" pounced Fry. I readily explained. The fun was to be found in the expression upon the dragon's face. The spear had gone through its hooped-up neck once, and now startled it by arriving at a second thickness. "Oh dear, here it comes again, I hoped that was all" it was thinking. Fry laughed too, but not altogether at the misfortunes of the dragon. He was amazed that anyone could go so completely off the lines. There was no harm in it—but really, really! He was even more amazed when our enthusiasms coincided: "I fancy we are talking about different things," he would say, and we always were; I liked the mountain-back because it reminded me of a peacock, he because it had some structural significance, though not as much as the sack of potatoes in the foreground.

Long years of wandering down miles of galleries have convinced me that there must be something rare on those coloured slabs called "pictures," something which I am incapable of detecting for myself, though glimpses of it are to be had through the eyes of others. How much am I missing? And what? And are other modern sight-seers in the same fix? Ours is an aural rather than a visual age, we do not get so lost in the concert hall, we seem able to hear music for ourselves, and to hear it as music, but in galleries so many of us go off at once into a laugh or a sigh or an amorous day-dream. In vain does the picture recall us. "What have your obsessions got to do with me?" it complains. "I am neither a theatre of varieties nor a spring-mattress, but paint. Look at my paint." Back we go—the picture kindly standing still meanwhile, and being to that extent more obliging than music—and resume the looking-business. But something is sure to intervene—a tress of hair, the half-open door of a summer-house, a Crivelli dessert, a Bosch fish-and-fiend salad—and to draw us away.

One of the things that helps us to keep looking is composition. For many years now I have associated composition with a diagonal line, and when I find such a line I imagine I have gutted the picture's secret. Giorgione's Castelfranco Madonna has such a line in the Lance of the warrior-saint, and Titian's *Entombment* at Venice has a very good one indeed. Five figures contribute to make up the diagonal; beginning high on the left with the statue of Moses, it passes through the heads of the Magdalene, Mary, and the dead Christ, and plunges through the body of Joseph of Arimathea into the ground. Making a right angle to it, flits the winged Genius of Burial. And to the right, apart from it, and perpendicular, balancing the Moses, towers the statue of Faith. Titian's *Entombment* is one of my easiest pictures. I look at photographs of it intelligently, and encourage the diagonal and the pathos to reinforce one another. I see, with more than usual vividness, the grim alcove at the back and the sinister tusked pedestals upon which the two statues stand. Stone shuts in flesh; the whole picture is a tomb. I hear sounds of lamentation, though not to the extent of shattering the general scheme; that is held together by the emphatic diagonal, which no emotion breaks. Titian was a

very old man when he achieved this masterpiece; that too I realise, but not immoderately. Composition here really has been a help, and it is a composition which no one can miss: the diagonal slopes as obviously as the band on a threshing-machine, and vibrates with power.

Unfortunately, having no natural æsthetic aptitude, I look for diagonals everywhere, and if I cannot find one think the composition must be at fault. It is a word which I have learnt—a solitary word in a foreign language. For instance, I was completely baffled the other day by Velasquez's *Las Meninas* at Geneva. Wherever was the diagonal? Then the friend I was with—and it was the friend who, after Roger Fry, has helped me with pictures most—set to work on my behalf, and cautiously underlined the themes. There is a wave. There is a half-wave. The wave starts up on the left, with the head of the painter, and curves down and up through the heads of the three girls. The half-wave starts with the head of Isabel de Velasco, and sinks out of the canvas through the dwarfs. Responding to these great curves or inverting them, are smaller ones on the women's dresses or elsewhere. All these waves are not merely pattern; they are doing other work too—e.g., helping to bring out the effect of depth in the room, and the effect of air. Important too is the pushing forward of objects in the extreme left and right foregrounds, the easel of the painter in the one case, the paws of a placid dog in the other. From these, the composition curves back to the central figure, the lovely child-princess. I put it more crudely than my friend did, nor do I suppose that his account would have been Velasquez's, or that Velasquez would have given any account at all. But it is an example of the way in which pictures should be tackled for the benefit of us outsiders: coolly and patiently, as if they were designs, so that we are helped at last to the appreciation of something non-mathematical. Here again, as in the case of the *Entombment*, the composition and the action reinforced one another. I viewed with increasing joy that adorable party, which had been surprised not only by myself but by the King and Queen of Spain. There they were in the looking glass! *Las Meninas* has a snap-shot quality. The party might have been taken by Philip IV, if Philip IV had had a Kodak. It is all so casual—and yet it is all so elaborate and sophisticated, and I suppose those curves and the rest of it help to bring this out, and to evoke a vanished civilisation.

Besides composition there is colour. I look for that, too, but with even less success. Colour is visible when thrown in my face—like the two cherries in the great grey Michael Sweertz group in the National Gallery. But as a rule it is only material for dream.

On the whole, I am improving, and after all these years! I am learning to get myself out of the way a little, and to be more receptive, and my appreciation of pictures does increase. If I can make any progress at all, the average outsider should do better still. A combination of courage and modesty is what he wants. It is so unenterprising to annihilate everything that's made to a green thought, even when the thought is an exquisite one. Not-looking at art leads to one goal only. Looking at it leads to so many. E. M. FORSTER

VISION

THERE is no more of the single love
Or the simple hope,
So multifarious have they become
That we know not doom;
There is always an exit into another room,
We are not confined,
Even when this earth has perished we shall leave it behind.

Nevertheless, there is a passage to be made,
It is the passing that is the life;
Not the life that was, or the life that is to come,
Simply the life:
The entrance at one door and the exit at another,
The passing from light into the shade
And from shade into light.

Do not think these are little things!
There is no passing with sister or with brother
But a solitude of partings.
For we can neither enter nor go out together
Whether with a tear or a smile;
Can we reckon up our joy with our grief
Or measure separation by the mile?

Nothing finishes until it is finished:
Therefore I prophesy no more grief.
We shall not even wave a farewell;
The lips of lovers
Shall not need the joining and separation of a kiss,
Stationary they shall not be diminished,
Simultaneous all agony and all bliss!

Life in its beginning is finished,
The sequence of events it is all one,
There is nothing not both done and undone,
The place of Heaven it is in Hell.
There is nowhere to go but only going,
There is only One in the dwellings where all dwell.
Where are the winds our forefathers heard blowing?

Your grief it will not be uttered,
Your joy it will not be spoken,
No more into fragments will life be broken,
All shall be separate only in the imagination,
Clear and distinct not a syllable stuttered,
All the angelic loves intent in their station
Perfect the myriad Unity of creation!

W. J. TURNER

THE WORM WILL TURN

A MILD winter night; a lamplit pier on Coney Island (N.Y.) and in a shabby little boat two mild old men, fishing: Jonah Goodman (a Jew) and Anagnos (a Greek pastry-cook). These two friends are the "Gentle People" after whom Mr. Irwin Shaw's play is named, which, after a long run in New York, is now to be seen excellently acted at the Strand Theatre. After the day's work is over, thus to foregather, thus to watch their lines and to dream of catching enormous fish in Cuban seas, has been the one sure, recurrent pleasure in their worried lives (Jonah has actually saved 190 dollars towards fulfilling that day-dream). His own life is poisoned by a nagging wife; that of his friend by the advances of the aggressive widow who employs him. Both these small women's parts are admirably played by Miss Joan Pereira and Miss Stella Rho respectively, and add a flavour of acrid comedy to the prolonged pathos of a play which ends, however, in the relief and excitement of an entirely sympathetic homicide—the killers being those much-provoked old cronies; their victim a racketeer, who, after breaking Jonah's rod and bashing the other's face, terrifies them into paying him five dollars a week for "protecting" their boat. Their appeal to the police only leads to a dismissal of the case by a corrupt judge, and to Jonah being thrashed afterwards by the gangster. And yet that is not the last straw.

Jonah has a daughter, the apple of his eye—a rotten little apple she is. Stella violently prefers to her steady young man this flash racketeer who, she knows, is bleeding her wretched father, for Goff shares her own notions of a free romantic life. When her father, in a last effort to get her out of his clutches, offers her his savings for a trip to Cuba, she tells her lover, who promptly demands those 190 dollars himself. Then, at last, the "gentle people" turn, and resolve to take the law into their own hands. We hear them plotting the death of

Goff in a Russian bath, where Jonah is trying to sweat the stiffness out of his aching back; we see them carry out the plan, which *almost* fails because the trembling Anagnos can't bring himself to strike the fatal blow at once; we watch them just escape detection afterwards. Stella repents and returns to her young man.

Jonah is interpreted with most acute insight and feeling by that accomplished actor, Mr. Abraham Sofaer, who has, by the way, a singularly moving voice. Mr. Ernest Jay, too, acts the more timid friend with a sure sense of character and contrast, while Mr. Clement McCallin plays the cad-to-the-marrow gangster with a businesslike cruelty and swagger which never degenerate into the pose of a stage villain. Miss Gina Malo does all that can be done with Stella, a part vitiated by the sentimentality of most American writers towards the young and their longing for "a good time." The dramatist seems to have no idea how impossible it is to think Stella's young man lucky in having won after all that scrap of unscrupulous vulgarity—incurable, too, obviously.

Apart from the acting, which impressed me, I did not think so well of the play at the time as I do in retrospect. Looking back, I see that the story was well-told, the characters were well-drawn, the situation moving. Yet, though also full of ingeniously contrived thrills of *momentary* suspense, the action developed too slowly and along lines too clearly foreseen to produce a crescendo of interest in the spectator. The most significant passage in the play was a conversation between Stella and her father, in which he tried to show her that she was in no way different from the humdrum working girls she despised as spiritless creatures. The next, was the gangster's boast that superior people (those who know that force rules the world) had a right to rob the helpless, uttered just before the reluctant and quaking old Greek brought down a bar of iron on his head. The irony of that was effective and, I hope, also prophetic.

DESMOND MACCARTHY

THE MOVIES

"Undercover Doctor," at the Plaza.
"Hostages," at the Curzon.
"Man About Town," at the Carlton.

Undercover Doctor is one of the pleasantest gangster films I have seen. It lacks the sadism and the terror of a classic like *Public Hero No. I*, where the last sight of many a dying man (unless he were shot from behind) was Joe Calleia's huge sad eyes. But a very pleasant film, all the same, smooth, fast, and nicely balanced. It is the life story of a little-known underworld by-product, the surgeon who goes wrong. For poor and alcoholic in hideous Small Town, and unappreciated except by loving nurse, he is called to an accident case, and patches up a wounded gangster for large reward. Then New York, bigger gangsters, trickier wounds, respectability, success, loving débutante, and loving nurse back again. But he can't keep off it, has to have twenty-five thousand dollars by morning, and when the familiar moment arrives, "I'm through, boys." "You mean you're going to quit." "Yes, I'm through." We can't believe him, because we know "I'm through" really means "just once more" and after that he's sunk. No débutante, no more love from loving nurse, G man takes her, only bullets, making mortal holes in people faster than he can sew them up again, and finally prison, a good ending, for he is no Clitterhouse, nor the type who uses medical knowledge for painless end ("one moment, gentlemen"), but though weak and crooked, a Healer. *Undercover Doctor* is extremely well acted, nobody stands out, the details are right, the construction admirable, the action swift and unemphatic. Carrol Naish, as the surgeon, has the right mixture of ruthlessness and weakness, weak at each downward step he takes, each horrible decision, and strong and brutal in between, as weak men are. Janice Logan, as the nurse, is a little wooden, but with nice chin, and not too priggish, while Lloyd Nolan, as the G man, gives an excellent piece of acting, neither too bright, too tough, nor too overweening. The gangsters are soundly conceived, but Richard Carle, as the big shot who's too high up to get, but ultimately is gotten, gives a fascinating performance, with a new conception of the role, and the moment when he is summoned to his downfall from among the gigantic chessmen, in the sacred alcoves of the exclusive City Club, is of fine comedy. The unassuming hideousness of the American decors, the raffish Victorian luxury which so many bullets are fired to achieve, that is well done too, and I recommend *Undercover Doctor* to anyone who enjoys good direction and who wants an exciting, but not a harrowing, evening.

Hostages is about a French village on the Marne in August, 1914, which is split by the feud between the Mayor and the Squire about a right of way, though mayor's daughter, the lovely and natural Mlle. Vernay, loves squire's son. Germans invade village, son escaping to regiment kills German officer, German commander demands five hostages who will be shot unless murderer found, and mayor, squire, postman, poacher, and little henpecked notary step from comic into tragic roles. The weak point of the film is a certain robust French sentimentality, the quality that mars *Clochemerle*, and, slick and overdone, ruins a paper like *Match*. This deserves mention because it is a serious defect in French comedy, and one that is encouraged by English audiences. The henpecked husband, the baby who makes a mess, the hobby ridden to death, the cosiness of village life, in which unpleasant and enduring passions are presented as lovable foibles, all exhibit the blurring anaesthetic quality of too much humour. Otherwise *Hostages* is magnificent. The photography is lovely, one sees the country round the Marne as in a Rimbaud poem, and the village of Cherz like a placid Utrillo, while the adult and intricate French character emerges from the direction of Raymond Bernard, as much as from the acting of Charpin. It is Charpin, as the mayor, who makes the picture, with his warm round French poker face, his hidden fires, and gallic stoicism—one touch of overacting from him and the picture would flop, but his village Regulus is perfect in detail. As the comedy expands into tragedy the acting and the direction improve, the audience become hostages too, they have a day only to live before the firing squad, the Uhlans condemn them to their unjust end by the gross and plausible justice of war, they see the faces of the Mayor and the Squire, a harsh old Royalist whose equivalent could be found only in Ulster, the Poacher and the Notary swimming into the new focus of death, their differences settled, their common humanity beating down the barriers, and their courage and nobility gathering strength against the inevitable foe. French strength, with its military variety and its love of *clichés*—"*il faut passer par là*"—and they share in the anti-climax, marred again by that humour which seems out of place with such excellent photography of the famous Paris taxis, and is really out of place, for after going through such an ordeal people do not immediately revert to type, and to the old quarrels. They may do so in the long run, but something is not forgotten. What worries me about these two films is the killing—all those bullet-ridden policemen and gangsters, because somebody has got to have fifty thousand dollars by to-morrow morning, and the dead German officer and the hanged hostage, because war is war and there seems to be a peculiar satisfaction in saying so. War, the natural justification of our existence, the state of grace to which we all aspire, the great excuse: "You understand that nobody regrets this more than me—but war is war, so, bang, gentlemen. He died for his country. Bang!"

Man About Town is not for killers, here all is sleek old-fashioned wit, the rich young American with his valet (and how they tease each other), the scramble to meet a real Duchess, the cross purposes, the *malentendus*, the misadventures of a Lady's Man. Great sadness descends on one in this film as the hearty Americans plunge about in a Michael Arlen world with faint echoes of Wilde and Wooster. And the audience seems to enjoy it so, especially the thrill of the Americans at getting into society—"meanwhile, Lady Arlington, acting on the advice of her friend decides to bring

Sir John to heel by making him jealous. She invites Bob down for the week-end. So Bob gets a call from the real Lady Arlington, and, thinking of his bet, gets permission to bring two friends. Both Lady Arlington and Madame Dubois succeed in letting their husbands see them in compromising positions with the unwilling Bob," etc. No. Better the tear gas and the Tommy Gun. And nobody seems very happy in the film, feeling perhaps that Americans are getting better at doing without Duchesses, or visiting the stately country clubs of England for a real week-end. And no amount of teasing will remove guilt about valets, nor Mr. Alan Scott's often extremely funny dialogue persuade me that he enjoyed writing it. And Dorothy Lamour looks hard and unattractive. So could not stay for more screaming situations, and also depressed by the English news reel, in which Royalty after Royalty unveils dead Royalty, cuts thread, pats pit ponies, lays on something with a trowel, like the warm buttery voice of the commentator himself. Time Mooches On.

CYRIL CONNOLLY

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Alien Corn," at Wyndham's

Alien Corn is a play with a strange power to it, which does not always quite come off. It is a welcome relief from the brittle drawing-room comedies, if only because its theme is worthwhile: the difficulties confronted by genius, and the deadening effect of prostitution to security. Technically, it is well written; the college campus atmosphere—the characters—the abominations of untalented amateurs, all are well drawn. There are welcome wisecracks from Phipps the journalist in the best American tradition. But it remains essentially a play with one virtuoso part (written for Katherine Cornell); everything evolves round Elsa, the girl whose musical talent is dying from want of proper use and tuition. The part offers an actress everything she can ask; for it is the personal story of every conscientious artist. Miss Margaretta Scott played the part firmly, if somewhat unrestrainedly. Mr. Hartley Power was excellent as the lowbrow Middle West American. Miss Marian Spencer made more than the most of an unsympathetic part; Mr. John Clements was a true neurotic. Altogether, an unsophisticated, direct play, sometimes sentimental, sometimes compelling—not for the hardboiled—another facet of versatile American drama by one of their leading playwrights.

Contemporary Art at Osterley Park

On Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays the interior of Osterley is now open to the public. This magnificent house, remodelled and redecorated by Adam, is a finely preserved fascinating example of late eighteenth-century taste—Chippendale furniture, Boucher tapestries, Angelica Kauffmann medallions, and elaborate mouldings. The Adam style, derived from Diocletian's palace at Spalato, may often seem a little thin and fussy, when compared with the bolder manner of the preceding half-century, but it is always interesting and often delicious. The "Etruscan" saloon at Osterley is one of the prettiest rooms in England, and the great open portico, set flush with the façade, is a superb invention. The house contains some fine Old Masters, including a grandiose Rubens, a lovely Gainsborough landscape and many good portraits. The owner, Lord Jersey, deserves our gratitude not only for opening his house (which too few proprietors of such mansions are willing to do) but for encouraging contemporary art: five rooms have been given up to an exhibition of modern English painting and sculpture. Mr. Proudfoot, who is responsible for the choice of these works, has made a catholic choice—Royal Academic pictures hang by the side of paintings by the most respectable artists. (Incidentally, some small pictures by a deceased R.A., Henry Bishop, are very well worth looking at). Sickert, Duncan Grant, Vanessa Bell, Keith Baynes, Adrian Daintrey, Suddaby, Pitchforth and Frank Dobson are among the artists well represented. Augustus John shows two interesting portraits, Dylan Thomas and J. M. Hone. The organiser of the exhibition shows a number of his own paintings—*Battersea Basin* is specially good. The sculpture of Jussuf Abbo is very charming. Such an exhibition adds to the privilege of visiting Osterley; also it leaves one wishing that some of these living artists could be given a room there to decorate. If Mr. Duncan Grant, for instance, undertook this, the result would be even more delightful than the Etruscan room.

Rouault at the Mayor Gallery.
John Nash and Eve Kirk at Tooth's.
Pic and H. M. Jonas at the Matthieson Gallery.

Mr. Mayor has assembled a superb series of paintings by Rouault. There's little new to be said about this artist, but the more one sees his work the more one respects and enjoys it. His works are not various either in colour or feeling, yet his style never sinks into a formula. Like a Romanesque artist born nine hundred years late, he is preoccupied with the terror and compassion of Christ, with the cruelty and carnality of woman. This important exhibition includes pictures of various periods, the pre-War *Baigneuses* being one of his most impressive works.

One oil and a group of water-colours by John Nash at Tooth's confirm all the good one has thought of this painter. He is enriching his palette, and also achieving a greater freedom of handling. Fascinated by the odd forms to be found in Nature, he presents, unlike the Surrealists, his discoveries in logical and well-constructed designs. His use of aquarelle is brilliant—*The Hidden Deer*, for instance, would take its place happily among the best traditional English water-colours, yet it has a surprise in it that is specifically of our time.

Miss Eve Kirk's paintings always look better separately than in a group. Her pale pictures, like the view of the Thames and of La Condamine, remain the most felicitous, but she is now experimenting with heavier colours. This is welcome, as it would be sad for so gifted an artist to confine herself to what she had already discovered. She is one of the most delightful of "drawing-room painters."

"Pic" is a new painter, gifted, original and gay. His pictures usually have French titles, and are French in humour and style, but it seems that he is a Scot. Naivety, as exploited by would-be Douaniers, has become infinitely boring, but Pic's taste and accomplishment quickly overcome one's prejudices. The big pictures are usually rather more than he can pull off, though *Faun with Fiddle* is enchanting. His little pictures are almost all successes. Evidently he has an extraordinary gift for illustration, which we recommend to an enterprising publisher. *Aux Bains Economiques*, *Langueurs de Printemps*, and *La Confession au Punchinello* are particularly happy. Altogether this is a most taking artist, with a witty eye, and a delicious sense of colour. He is likely (and deserves) to be popular. Mr. Jonas is as clever as you make them: he paints society portraits with crumbly paint rather like a late Sickert's, which may attract clients who want something a little more stylish than the Burlington House stuff. Startling likenesses, no doubt, but all the more distressing for their superficial sophistication. His imaginative works are dashing but empty, and a few small still lifes show that he has a genuine talent for painting.

New paintings by Young English Painters at the Storran

Most of the pictures in this Exhibition are of the type which we have come to associate with the Euston Road School of Drawing and Painting, where students are wisely discouraged from concealing incompetence under a show of bravura. Mr. Lawrence Gowing has proved the star pupil, and he shows here a most honourable picture; Mr. Stokes is another pupil who is making great progress. Mr. Coldstream has sent nothing, but there are a couple of paintings by Mr. Pasmore, a gay London landscape by Mr. Rogers, and a very well-planned picture of a swimming bath by Mr. Graham Bell. It is possible to complain that painters of this school do not carry their pictures through, stopping at the most difficult moment, like alpinists who laboriously climb a mountain but shirk the final precipitous ascent. They urge the claims of realism, but avoid alike the atmospheric realism of a Manet and the minute realism of a de Hooch. In fact, they seem (luckily) more interested in design, mood and the expression of sensibility than in the principles they profess. A reaction against the current extravagances of abstract and surrealist artists is inevitable, and for students Discretion is certainly the better part of Valour. But in order to be distinguished it does not suffice to avoid vulgarity, and the general effect of this Exhibition, it must be admitted, is a little insipid. (Mr. Bell has taken a plunge into vivid colour, but his picture remains almost a monochrome. For realism he deserves high marks—you can almost smell the swimming-bath.)

The exhibition includes one lurid piece in a Burlington House style, *Drury Lane After the Play*. Is this included, one wonders, as a cautionary tale, an example of what happens to naughty boys who disobey their governesses? (The good boys can be equally depressing, as is shown by Mr. Colin MacInnes.)

Mr. Devas, Miss Nicolette Macnamara, Mr. Rocke, Mr. Morland Lewis and Mr. John Dodgson show very pleasant pictures, and Mr. Lynton Lamb's *Messenger Boy* is specially commendable, because the artist infects us with his own interest in something seen. The two best paintings in the Exhibition are by Mr. Rodrigo Moynihan. The little snow-scene is delicately seen and beautifully painted. Among the painters of what has unkindly been called the Coldfeet School, Mr. Moynihan stands out by the audacity of his attack. He plays Manet, as it were, to Mr. Bell's Pissarro, to Mr. Pasmore's Monet, to Mr. Rogers's Renoir, and to Mr. Coldstream's Degas; and certainly paints far more like his prototype than any of the others. These painters have uncommon seriousness and determination: they are swans, no doubt, but they have not yet shed the last of their grey cygnet feathers.

Soviet Folk Art and Handicraft at Caxton Hall.

This exhibition contains many enchanting things, fish-skin coats from the Goldi tribe, Lamutian rugs of reindeer fur, Kirghiz coats, Uzbek silks, birch-bark boxes from Ude, toys from Kirov, pottery from Georgia, the Ukraine and Kazakhistan. Not only is the ethnological and anthropological diversity of the U.S.S.R. delightfully illustrated, but the feeling for design and material, traditional among so many primitive peoples, is once more impressed upon us. Unluckily the show also contains some sad stuff—ivory carvings, wood-carvings and some of the lacquer and lace that seems a caricature of bourgeois taste. The degradation of the handicraft as industrialisation spreads is a familiar story in Western Europe, and it would be interesting to know what steps the governments of the U.S.S.R. are taking to avoid in their territories a similar collapse. Perhaps nothing can be done, though the example of Sweden offers some hope. In any case, the organisers of this exhibition have been honest, and cannot be accused of erecting Potemkin villages. They expose lovely and horrible things side by side, indiscriminately. The horrors are like those which we produce ourselves—they have the same quality as the decoration of the hall in which they are exhibited. The beauties, on the other hand, are unfamiliar and make a visit to the show highly enjoyable.

THE COMING WEEK

SATURDAY, JULY 15th—
- National Council of Labour Colleges Summer School, University Hall, Bangor.
- Open-air Fiesta in aid of Spanish Refugees. King Alfred School, North End Road, 3–11.

SUNDAY, JULY 16th—
- Prof. Susan Stebbing: "Ideals and Illusions," Conway Hall, 11.

MONDAY, JULY 17th—
- Tewkesbury Drama Festival, including "The Tower" and "The Boy David." Till July 29th. Particulars from Tewkesbury Abbey.
- Haslemere Festival under the direction of Arnold Dolmetsch, Haslemere Hall. Till July 29th.
- "The Wind and the Rain," Coliseum.
- "The House in Dormer Forest," Barn Theatre, Shere.
- Opening of Peter Bull's Summer Theatre, Perranporth.

TUESDAY, July 18th—
- F. J. Osborn: "Housing Densities," Housing Centre Lunch, 13 Suffolk Street, S.W.1, 1. Non-members, 1s.
- Special Film Show, including "The Edge of the World," in aid of Lord Baldwin Fund, Philharmonic Hall, Liverpool, 8.
- Reading of Poetry by Idris Davies and Louis MacNeice, 67 Eton Avenue, N.W.3, 8.15.

THURSDAY, July 20th—
- "The Devil to Pay," His Majesty's.

FRIDAY, July 21st—
- Deana Levin: "Money, Love and Ambition in the U.S.S.R," 67 Eton Avenue, 8.

Correspondence

SHELTERS

SIR,—Mr. Philip James's letter requires rectifying. Since the September crisis, some of the finest technical brains in the country have been collaborating under the auspices of Sir John Anderson, and have now produced a very complete code of structural precautions, which forms the body of the present Civil Defence Bill, soon to become an Act. There are literally thousands of architects and engineers, acquainted with the Code, available to advise people like Mr. James on how to protect their household or their staff in a manner to conform with Government requirements, and at a cost from which there is every reason to believe there will be some form of Government relief.

The Government has decided that the people shall be protected in their homes and at their place of work, in "individual" shelters. It has, as yet, no clear policy for "public" shelters to take the people jay-walking in the street. This is because it is still struggling with the intricate problems of deep shelters versus evacuation. With evacuation, there will be no jay-walkers in the streets who cannot be accommodated in the "individual" shelters of the buildings round about. But, unfortunately, preliminary inquiries have revealed that many people do not wish to be evacuated. As in Barcelona, they prefer to stay and watch "the fun." The trouble with deep shelters is that none of the designs so far submitted by experts are fool-proof, and few of them bomb-proof. This applies equally to those at Barcelona, referred to by Mr. James, and to Messrs. Tecton and Arup's designs for Finsbury.

The Government has meanwhile sensibly decided to rule out protection from the direct hit, leaving the civilian population open to the same risk therefrom as the Tommy in the front line, or the reserve and hospital nurse in its rear. For "individual" protection from the indirect hit, the Code embodied in the Civil Defence Bill is most painstakingly thorough and sound. It deals mainly with the building of "individual" shelters under, in or near houses, flats and works, and the strengthening of basements or internal ground floor rooms to act as refuges in existing buildings. It emphasises that each case has to be treated on its merits, and that these should be determined by "skilled advice."

If Mr. James is a householder wishing a shelter for his family, let him consult an architect. If he is an employer wishing to shelter his staff, again let him consult an architect. If he is an employee in an unsheltered works, let him badger his employer to consult an architect. If he wants to be evacuated, or to feel safe when jay-walking, let him badger his local authority to make surveys, work out schemes, to submit to the Government for approval or advice. There are two professions simply bursting with knowledge of the Government A.R.P. Code, and longing to impart it, at the usual fees, to the citizen. But will Citizen James seek professional advice? No. He prefers to sit back, and wait for the Government to spoon-feed him, abusing it the while. Of such is the Kingdom of Democracy!

"A.R.P. ARCHITECT."

THE BATTLE OF THE RENTS

SIR,—Your anonymous correspondent raises some arguments which are quite plausible but have little to do with the actual facts.

Houses are not just commodities to be sold over the counter. They are the centres around which people build their lives. The Tenants' Leagues maintain that the tenants have the right to a voice in what their homes should be like, that landlords should provide an honest "article" and not allow it to fall into decay and neglect, and that the rents for their homes should not be at the mercy of the speculator in property. The question of philanthropy does not come into the picture.

These are not new principles. In fact the best landlords do set aside a regular and fairly considerable proportion of the rent for maintenance and "depreciation," while the Rent Restrictions Acts recognise the principle that there must be some protection for tenants against the rack-renting landlord who believes he is entitled to squeeze "as large a return on his money as he is offered by the tenants." Behind this phrase lies the practice of the property speculator. One landlord sells to another at the highest possible price and each tries to increase the "value" of the property by extracting as much as he can from the tenant, spending as little as possible on maintenance and repair.

The Rents Acts were a long overdue measure, first passed in 1915 when the war situation gave landlords further opportunity to indulge in wholesale speculation and the raising of rents, until there were outbursts in many parts of the country. The Acts were intended to check this speculation and curb the activity of the rack-renters, and for a time they did this. But persistently property-owners have campaigned against the Acts on the specious plea that their removal would involve "no undue hardship" to tenants.

When tenants in the past few years started once again to organise into Defence Leagues, they found that not only had the protection of the Acts been removed from more than half the houses previously safeguarded in law, but that many landlords had been for years disregarding the Acts even where they still applied.

The Tenants' Leagues have been taking up the cases of controlled tenants under the Acts. But what is the de-controlled tenant to do? He is held up to ransom, often forced to pay "key money" or premiums on entry amounting to as much, to my knowledge, as £50. If he falls in arrears with his rent, the landlord has that medieval weapon, given to no other creditor, the right to levy distress on the tenant's household goods and furniture, without even going to the County Court. If the tenant asks for repairs, usually even if he calls in the sanitary inspector, the landlord can and does victimise him by giving or threatening to give notice to quit, or raising the rent; and he is charged a rent 50 per cent. to 100 per cent. and sometimes 200 per cent. higher than that of his controlled neighbour, who may be living next door in exactly the same type of house. But however high the rent or rotten the house, the landlord tries to justify this by reference to the "sanctity of contract" and the immutable and transcendental laws of supply and demand (God bless 'em!). It is reminiscent of the arguments used by factory owners a century ago against the Ten Hour Movement and the early efforts of the trade unions to organise against miserably low wages and insufferably long hours. (What diabolical interference with freedom of contract. These men must be Communists!)

What are tenants to do when, so far from dealing with the problem, the Government and property owners seem to go out of their way to make the situation worse; when property owners frequently use their influence with local authorities to prevent sanitary notices from being issued; when the Government has repealed the Wheatley Act, the only effective post-war measure for the encouragement of municipal house-building; when in spite of waiting-lists for municipal houses (there are over 4,000 tenants in Stepney alone on the list for municipal houses and flats) local authorities are obstructed at every turn from building with or without subsidy; when the Government is forcing local authorities—on the ground of the need to prepare for "national emergency"—to neglect their ordinary housing and even public health work; when the Government last year removed rent control from a further half-million houses, giving landlords a present of at least £5 million per annum, and threatens to remove the Acts altogether in 1942?

I sincerely hope that Anonymous is really concerned about the "ugly ogre" of the shortage of working-class houses at reasonable rents. The remedy lies not in an appeal to freedom of contract and blaming the situation on to competition among tenants for accommodation, or on to the admittedly bad rating system. The remedy lies in legislation directly on the issues: in restoring the protection of the Rent Acts to all pre-war houses below a certain level; in applying a form of rent control for post-war houses; in laying down a standard of building and a minimum standard of fitness in the houses, and extending the powers of local authorities to enable these standards to be enforced; in encouraging building by municipal authorities—in any case municipalities as a general rule build better, plan their estates better, and build more cheaply; and recognising housing as a vital national service.

It is clear that the problem is not limited to pre-war houses; nor is it entirely confined to the working-class. It is clear, too, that not all property owners behave alike, nor is the property owner the only one to blame.

It is not a question of holding on to another person's possessions. For that matter most of the tenants in Stepney have repaid the original value of the houses they live in two or three times over during their tenancies. It is a question of establishing a vital human and social principle which sooner or later will have to be incorporated in legislation.

If your correspondent does not think a fight for this principle heroic, at the risk of eviction, he is entitled to his opinion. I do not understand the mentality of a person who, knowing the hovels in which so many Stepney tenants have to live, the cheating practised on them and the extraordinary power given to the landlord by law, refuses to admire them for making a stand against those conditions.

Federation of Tenants' & Residents' Associations,
22 Chancery Lane, W.C.2.

MICHAEL BEST,
Hon. General Secretary

ULSTER AND THE I.R.A.

SIR,—Lately I have been astonished at the ignorance I have found in well-informed English circles concerning affairs in my own country. That these affairs concern the English is being brought home to them by a series of bomb explosions. Yet no one seems to realise that men do not risk life and liberty for the sake of wanton destruction. There must be something behind all this, and it is just this reason which is kept from the British public; it is Ulster and the boundary question.

Every year, since the partition of Ireland, the Westminster Parliament (Conservative, National or Labour) has voted twelve million pounds to Ulster. Ulster (or more properly speaking, the Government of Northern Ireland) is not expected to contribute anything towards the war debt. No, it is they who must be paid. The British Government thought nothing of ruining the farmers of Southern Ireland for the sake of a couple of million they expected them to pay. But let that pass. The important matter is that twelve million of English money, money taken from the pockets of the taxpayers of England, Scotland and Wales, is given every year to Ulster, mainly for the support of an army of thugs—the B. Specials.

And not one word of protest rises from the Opposition benches.

Ireland is not, as the English so often think, a country divided into two parts, Protestant and Catholic. They are all mixed up. Only in the district around Belfast are the Protestants in a majority. Tyrone, Derry, South Down and parts of Fermanagh are mainly Catholic and Nationalist, and owing to the larger families of the Catholics the small margin the Protestant Unionists possess is constantly threatened. The Ulster Protestants of the North hold their power through terrorism, the jerrymandering of elections, and *the driving out of the Catholic Nationalist population.* That I am not straining the truth can be verified by anyone who cares to apply to the Council of Civil Liberties. In a country where there is a large Catholic population, there is not one Catholic Judge. Nor one important Catholic official. From that you can deduce the rest.

It has always been the fear of the Ulster capitalist that the Protestant and Catholic workers might make common cause against him. This he prevents by a continual religious propaganda. It is only possible for those who have lived in Ulster, in contact with the common people, to know how perfect and far-reaching this propaganda is and how horrible are its effects.

Now, this is a matter which does not lie between England and Ireland alone. There are more Irish out of Ireland than in it. These descendants of those who fled from English misrule are more inflexible in their hatred than the Irish who still live in Ireland. Tradition is long-lived. It is stupid to talk of Nazi money; talk rather of American money and you'll be nearer the mark. The Irish Americans control a large vote in the United States and they are a powerful anti-British body. If they were to join with the German Americans, which so far they have not done, their influence might easily be preponderant. The arrest of Sean Russell in the States during the Royal visit had one unpleasant result. The Irish American Congressmen, in one body, refused all participation in the welcome President Roosevelt gave to the King and Queen. When the ultimate fate of the British Empire may depend on the attitude of the United States in the event of war, surely it would be good policy, apart from justice, to settle this Ulster question.

There is no danger that the Ulster Protestants would find themselves oppressed, though the wealthy merchants might find themselves poorer, if they had to come in with the South. The Protestants of the South are not oppressed. Many of them hold important positions in the government of their country. There are Protestant judges and magistrates. I am a Protestant, born and schooled in Ulster, yet I have always found my Catholic countrymen more tolerant in every way than my co-religionaries.

51 Belsize Lane,
N.W.3.

MARGARET BARRINGTON

THE HAWTHORNDEN COMMITTEE

SIR,—Merely as a matter of private interest, may I correct Mr. Stonier's statement in last week's issue that I am a member of the Hawthornden Committee? I have no wish to dissociate myself from the Committee's latest choice, but in point of fact, as Sir John Squire mentioned in a recent article in the *Observer*, I resigned (not because of any difference of opinion) last year.

ROBERT LYND

REFUGEE BOY

SIR,—I cannot refrain from writing to you to say what a refreshment it was to read this morning the letter of "A Refugee Boy" in your columns. It was like the coming-out of a star in a night

of dark clouds. Mr. Brian Howard expressed the anger, the just anger, that cannot be repressed, but this young man reaches down to a deeper spring and enables us to believe that there is still hope for humanity. N. MACNICOL

Edinburgh.

[We have had a number of similar letters and inquiries for the refugee's address, which unfortunately we have not got. We should be obliged if he would communicate with us.—ED. *N.S.&N.*]

HUNGARIAN REFUGEES

SIR,—In a recent article on Hungary, your correspondent touches on the state of Jews in Hungary and speaks about their " making attempts to get out before it is too late." I should like to add to this remark by drawing your readers' attention to the fact that already we have in London a number of potential refugees from Hungary who seek in vain for help from relief committees. Chief amongst these Jews, non-aryan Christians and anti-Fascists are those who suffer under the clauses of the Chamber of Journalists formed at the end of April and constituting nothing less than a broad-side attack on Hungarian intellectual and cultural freedom.

Non-acceptance by this Chamber denies to some 1,500 non-Aryan and anti-Fascist writers and journalists the possibility of ever attaining a staff position on a newspaper and provides them with but rare opportunities of contributing outside articles. The Chamber does not recognise the Magyar Ujsagirok Egyesulete with its affiliation to the International Journalist Federation. Refusal of membership has been extended to London correspondents even of Government papers; and no more than two of the hitherto numerous officially accredited Hungarian correspondents in London have been admitted.

Many staff journalists of anti-Fascist newspapers, notably the National-Liberal journal *Pesti Naplo* and the Socialist organ *Nepszava* with their respective editors—Michael Foldi and Illes Monus, are likewise disqualified from membership.

Although this measure is recognised as part and parcel of a policy which aims at wiping out, by perniciously Fascist legislation, all Jewish and anti-Fascist elements from cultural and intellectual life, I understand that its severity has come as a keen shock to the general Hungarian public. STELLA SCHOFIELD

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JONATHAN CAPE

THE DUCHESS OF POPOCATAPETL

SIR,—Some years ago I reviewed adversely under an assumed name in your columns a book of my own. Last week some may think that it was I who reviewed my own latest novel under the initials G. W. S.

It is true that these are the initials of Mr. G. W. Stonier, your esteemed assistant literary editor, but it is clear that only I could have put such ideas into a colleague's head. W. J. TURNER

Savile Club, 69, Brook St., W.1.

A FORGOTTEN LINK IN IMPERIAL DEFENCE

SIR,—Few people, particularly our politicians, remember that Britain has three possessions in the Mediterranean; Gibraltar, Malta, and Cyprus. Of these, Cyprus is by far the largest and while the other two are heavily fortified and guarded, Cyprus is almost forgotten. At the moment, the only protection the island has is its obscurity and a battalion of the 1st Essex regiment, and no doubt, in the event of war, it could be seized by the colonial-minded Italians almost with impunity.

There are two main reasons why attention should be drawn to Cyprus. First, it is a Crown Colony and must therefore be defended, and secondly, it is of considerable strategic importance.

The island is about 100 miles from Palestine (Limassol to Beirut is 132), some 60 from Asia Minor, 200 from Egypt and the *Suez Canal*, and 280 from the fortified Italian bases at Rhodes and the Dodecanese islands. Look at these figures and remember the range of modern bombing planes, and there is no need for comment. It is generally considered that in the event of war, the Suez Canal would be attacked, and it is therefore well protected. I was in Egypt during the Albanian crisis, and the movement of troops towards Port Said, Ismalia and Suez, was noticeable. But should difficulties arise, *e.g.*, the withdrawal of troops from Egypt to defend the Libyan or Sudanese borders, reinforcements for the canal zone could only be obtained from Palestine, and that, for obvious reasons, would lead to further complications. And if Cyprus were attacked, her defence would have to be sent from Egypt or Palestine. Yet the solution to the Near East problem is simple—garrison Cyprus.

To do this would be of considerable value to the island itself. The island is a poor one, almost completely agricultural, and in need of improvement. To give only two examples :—an improved water supply is needed at the capital, Nicosia, and an irrigation scheme for the fertile plain of the Messaoria would be of immense benefit to a large portion of the peasant farmers.

There are two summer aerodromes in the island, at Nicosia and Larnaca, and without too much difficulty, these could easily be made into permanent and useful links in the chain of Imperial communications. There are no geographical difficulties in the way of establishing aerodromes or camps, and the shipping facilities of the island would repay improvement. The only harbour of consequence is Famagusta, and a naval expert, writing as long ago as 1912, declared that with further expenditure, Famagusta could be made the best harbour in the Near East.

And the Cypriots are loyal members of the Empire. Some few of them do talk of " Enosis," *i.e.*, reunion with Greece, but the majority of the population is solidly in favour of British control. Incidentally, the only time that Cyprus belonged to Greece was during the age of Alexander ! About 79 per cent. of the population speaks Greek, 19 per cent. Turkish, and the remaining 2 per cent. is made up of English, Armenians and Arabs, plus the usual sprinkling of other nationalities. During recent months I have been repeatedly asked by sturdy young Cypriots, " Why can't I join the British army ? " and although there are signs of a proposed Cyprus Defence Force, nothing official has yet been done to make use of this loyalty.

There is every reason why the attention of the Government should be drawn to the position of Cyprus, and it is to be hoped that our politicians will take notice of the island before it is too late. S. C. LEWIS

Mitses School, Lemythor, Cyprus.

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

THERE was a happy fellowship between the pony in the shafts and the dog trotting almost under the axle of the dog-cart, to which the advent of the motor-car has put an end. A dog was in its proper place hanging about the stable: it is in the way among the spanners and grease-guns of the garage. Moreover, dogs no longer get the exercise they need to make them tolerable companions. The remedy is for motorists, and indeed for all who live in this mechanical age, to get heliotropic dogs. I have never seen one, since they are extremely rare, so I cannot describe whether they look like Airedales, or Dalmatians, or Bull Terriers, but there is no doubt that if a demand arose, they could be obtained in every variety to be seen at Crufts. They will need a certain amount of improvement, since their inventor, Mr. Hays Hammond, only got his original model to run at a speed of 100 yards a minute—about 3½ m.p.h. The dog is mechanical, containing an electric motor which is controlled by two selenium cells—its eyes. The electrical conductivity of selenium varies with light, and the dog will follow the tail light of a car automatically. Indoors, the mechanism can be put into reverse and the dog will then rush of its own accord into the darkest corner of the room, or will crawl under the sofa and lie there for hours without whining. If the owner wishes to amuse himself with it, he need only brandish an electric torch to make it jump about him with wild, but not unmeaning bounds, since each will be exactly proportioned to the candle-power of the lamp, and the distance at which it is held from the animal's eyes. I should like to see a movement for the mechanisation of pets in cities. The amount of noise and filth which would be got rid of would make London a different place. A variety of the heliotropic dog has been employed, suitably enough, as a burglar alarm. I can imagine the creatures playing an important part in warfare. Packs of the winged dogs of war could be unleashed from aeroplanes to attack enemy searchlights, or to nose out every window which had not been completely darkened. One would lie in terror listening to them pouncing upon anybody who recklessly lit a cigarette, until with the first streak of dawn they would rise and make off to the East. They would be as dangerous as the spaniel belonging to a fish poacher at Ardee, in Ireland, who had just thrown a stick of dynamite with a lighted fuse into a salmon pool, when he saw his dog jump in and seizing it in his jaws bring it back to land. The poacher ran for his life while his spaniel pursued him, until a loud explosion cut short the chase, and the poacher went home in the disgusting condition of the characters on the flat roof in Aldous Huxley's novel *Eyeless In Gaza*.

* * *

Uvarov has shown that the movements of locusts are partly phototropic, partly due to the individuals jostling each other; and the 27,000 experiments of Patten proved that the movements of the maggots of the blow-fly can be exactly controlled by light. The heliotropic dog ought therefore to be regarded rather as an insect—but apart from bees and silkworms, few people keep insects as pets. The exception seems to be the singing crickets kept in China and Japan. *The Insect Legion* by Malcolm Burr (Nisbet, 12*s.* 6*d.*) is packed with miscellaneous entomological information which I found fascinating, though not many of the facts about insects can be said to charm. Dr. Burr, though he has spent a lifetime studying insects, cannot regard them with detachment and describes the reproduction of the midge *Miastor* as *a shocking state of affairs*.

> The female midge contains very few eggs, only four or five, but they are so big that they nearly fill her whole abdomen. Each egg produces a large transparent larva, and each larva, while still within its mother's body, produces from seven to thirty daughter larvae. These precocious youngsters eat up their own parents, then gnaw their way out through their grandmother, and straightway give birth on their own account.

Let us forget about this midge, since there are plenty of other insects. They outnumber all other animals enormously: there are perhaps nearly a million different species of them, and many are terrifying. Readers of Mary Kingsley's books of African travel will remember her account of the driver-ants which advance blindly, in military formation, clearing the jungle of every living creature, and driving natives out of their villages. Even elephants are said to make off at their approach. The really deadly insects are those which share diseases with man and which, if they could be informed of the facts, would probably have as great a prejudice against man as the bearer of sleeping sickness, yellow fever, malaria, and bubonic plague, typhus and trench fever, as he has against them on the same account. The louse has decided more military campaigns than the generals of the world. Since a supply of cigarettes to the troops permits of the burning up the louse eggs in the seams of clothes, it may decide a campaign. Dr. Burr states that the Serbs lost 150,000 men through typhus during the Great War and estimates that there were from twenty to twenty-five million cases of it, of which perhaps three million were fatal, in Russia between 1917 and 1920. The rat flea has decided the fate of empires.

* * *

There are so many miscellaneous facts in Dr. Burr's book that I must mention some of them. For example, with regard to the senses of insects: the butterfly can detect the presence of sugar in a solution 256 times more dilute than the weakest that the human tongue can detect. The insect eye with its thousand of facets produces one image and that far less efficiently than our own. Dr. Burr says that the sense of smell in bees is poor, which I do not believe. There are a great many flowers, pollinated by bees, which rely almost entirely on their perfume as an attraction. Moreover, bees can detect the presence of a piece of honeycomb almost immediately, even if it is covered from sight. Dr. Burr describes cuckoo bumble bees which lay their eggs in other bumble bees' nests, sometimes provoking a violent battle. Of course, very many insects are beautiful: the most lovely of their social manifestations is probably the synchronous flashing of thousands of fireflies. Dr. Burr has no evil to report of our glow-worms.

> Ye country comets that portend
> No war, nor Prince's funeral,
> Shining unto no higher end
> Than to presage the Grasses fall

But he does tell us of a crustacean, a sandhopper, which suffers from a truly venereal disease, transmitted by copulation, which makes it luminous. The female mantis bites off her mate's head in the moment of ecstasy: the little black fly *Hilara* propitiates his mate with a parcel of food neatly wrapped up in a cocoon of threads. Many *Hilaras* have learned, however, to hand up a parcel which is all wrappings and contains no food. A problem, when considering insects, is to decide whether pure instinct is the most terrifying phenomenon that can be imagined. It is difficult to conceive anything more nightmarish than the processional caterpillars which, if linked up head to tail in a circle, will go on walking round a tree until death breaks their ranks. Such subjection of the individual judgment to that of the community is the greatest danger that faces mankind. Yet the opposite of blind instinct is almost equally terrifying. Such was the experience which befell G. W. and E. G. Peckham and, on a completely separate occasion, Dr. Williston of Kansas, who watched *Ammophila*, a sand-wasp, pick up a small pebble in her mandibles and use it as a hammer. She was no phototropic locust, no heliotropic dog, but a Frankenstein's monster which had suddenly become possessed of reason and was able to use a tool. Is the mechanical locust, or *Ammophila*, the most alarming companion to have with us on the globe? While extermination is the only way of dealing with the locust, it is conceivable that some method of appeasement might be employed with the sand-wasp. Probably once insects start to use tools all is up! And how long will *Ammophila* stay in the Stone Age?

DAVID GARNETT

NEW NOVELS

Wind Without Rain. By HERBERT KRAUSE. *Cape.* 8s. 6d.
Seasoned Timber. By DOROTHY CANFIELD. *Cape.* 8s. 6d.
Mr. Tyler's Saints. By MARJORIE BOWEN. *Hutchinson.* 7s. 6d.
Young Doctor. By ELIZABETH SEIFERT. *Collins.* 7s. 6d.

Literary vitality seems to have crossed the Atlantic. The American writer is an enthusiast, believing in himself and in the future of his art, and even the second-rate American novel has the vigour and objectivity of good reporting. In the United States, literature has a popular as well as an intellectual prestige, Middle-Western Universities set courses in novel-writing, and to display an imaginative feeling for history or a sense of social realities does not debar a book from selling a million copies. The typical American novelist writes about, and in the language of, his typical readers: he is not a peculiar individual of refined tastes and special sensibilities, but an ordinary man with a talent for self-expression. Of course, one may (like myself) prefer the dying fall of a Forster or the dull thud of an Orwell to the ecstasies and galvanics of a Faulkner or an O'Hara; but, all the same, it is America that provides us with most of our best-sellers, and I suspect it is American rather than English writers who best satisfy the taste of our novel-reading public. Mr. Krause and Miss Canfield are not outstanding writers, and neither of them possesses a wholly reliable critical faculty—to say, as does Mr. Krause:

> There must have been a small patch of singing in him, that minute, among those gall-blistered days crusting the heart like a sore; a small measure, perhaps, gill-sized, but squeezed behind to give him elbow-space to sing again, the heart needing as much room as the body; more, knowing the cavern it is sometimes.

is to push the imaginative into the ridiculous; and seems to me as ludicrous as the lumbering ingenuity of Dekker's:

> I think the bargemen might with easier thighs
> Have rowed her thither in her people's eyes.
> For how so ere, thus much my thoughts have scan'd,
> S'had come by water had she come by land

must have seemed to the more scholastically-minded of Elizabeth's mourners. Dekker and his kind, nevertheless, represented a new force in literature; and so, perhaps, for all their individual vulgarities, do these American novelists. For they clearly feel themselves driven by a creative impulse, and the often absurd intensity with which they attack their subjects holds fresh promise for a literary form that seems practically sterile in our own country.

Wind Without Rain is a gloomy and unprepossessing story about German-American settlers in one of the misery-spots of Minnesota, and the publishers, with a humour rare in such people, cannot resist comparing it to *Cold Comfort Farm*. Up to a point the comparison is a very apt one. The taciturn ferocity of the father, brooding continually in his dark soul and only rousing himself to hew down some huge tree or beat his feeble son Franz for wanting to play the violin, the miserable savagery of his four children, and around them all the reek of dung, the tang of blood, the dunning of the Bank, and the terrifying tirades of the hypocritical pastor are so heavily underlined as almost to lose their effect. In his way, Mr. Krause is as sentimental as Hardy, and his brutal farmer is nearly as improbable as Gabriel Oak. Yet, for all its over-emphasis, *Wind Without Rain* is highly impressive, and though any isolated page may seem over-written, its culminating effect is undeniably moving. Mr. Krause presents his characters as wholly of a piece with their environment, and sees their toils and wild junketings (these last exceptionally well described) as almost animal reflexes to their conditions of life. Franz, the only one to show any awareness of his lot, is kicked, tricked and trapped by father, lover and fate itself, until we leave him, quite subdued, submitting to a lifetime of the hard labour against which he unsuccessfully rebelled. The secret of Mr. Krause's effectiveness is that he writes like a poet. He is not a strikingly good poet, and often suggests comparisons that show him at a disadvantage—the "crazy whimper of a loon" is weaker than Mr. Eliot's "lunatic laugh." But because he realises that the words of a story are as important as the story itself, he writes with care and taste, and pays as much attention to the rhythm of a passage as to its meaning or syntax. Mr. Krause's story of the Earthly Purgatory is not brilliant, and is outstanding only in a bad season. But it is highly readable, and represents that upper-middle-class of talent in which English fiction is at present so noticeably deficient.

Seasoned Timber has the makings of a popular success. Old T. C. Hulme, the lovable middle-aged Headmaster of a New England country school, has most of Mr. Chips's endearing foibles, and teaches his tough pupils morals, skating and the Humanities with far greater verve and vigour. His fight against anti-Semitism, in the shape of a vast bequest to the struggling school on condition that it excludes Jews, wins our lively sympathy, and even his gauche and inarticulate love for a silly girl twenty years his junior is excused by its unsuccess (she finally marries a manly young fellow who, when he hears she has been involved in a motor accident, dashes his fist against the wall so that the blood spurts on to the carpet). The story is told with a dash that makes it genuinely entertaining, the characterisation, from T. C. himself to the revolting capitalist anti-Semite, is clean, bright and convincing, and the style has a polish wanting in so many modern novels. Unfortunately, Miss Canfield has not been content to write a good novel, but has attempted to produce a masterpiece; and in her efforts to be profound has achieved an almost metaphysical silliness. She apparently regards the intellect much as ascetics do the body—that is, as an instrument, indispensable no doubt, but detached from the personality—and gives T. C.'s mind a metaphorical life of its own. We are told that his mind "whipped out of its scabbard a rapier question—and, when he hesitated, lunged and ran him through," "traced an ironical arabesque," and "whimpered and cowered down in fear, its panic warning him of worse to come." Sometimes this volatile creature is in equine mood, and we read that "Mr. Hulme's mind, trotting soberly in harness, pricked up its ears and took an exploratory lope round." On other occasions it behaves like a dog, and "came bounding up with a colourful hypothesis," "pawed wildly about among the piles of phrases experience had taught him," or was "sent racing out to find the answer to an imperative question." There were darker days, too, when he "sent it slinking back, cringing under its punishment like a dog whipped for merely sniffing at a toothsome piece of offal . . . remembering, too, that there are some things which a Timothy Hulme handles without consulting his mind," or that dreadful evening when he worked until "his mind dropped in its tracks, and he hung up his whip and went to bed." All these adventures take us only to page 47, when I became tired of noting the exploits of "his mind, dear old helpmate," so I don't know what happened to it in the end. I noticed, however, that on page 105 "it snarled and stood on guard no more, his mind. It knew when it was beaten. It not only gave up resisting, it sent its spaniel eyes ranging to find proofs that its resistance had been absurd." I felt the same way myself. Seriously, though, how is one to explain this sort of nonsense? Miss Canfield is not a blundering amateur but a writer of experience and repute, and her present book shows high qualities of narrative and observation. The truth, I believe, is that she is free from all self-restraint, and ready to perform what others only consider. Such lack of literary inhibition seems a common peculiarity of American writers: Faulkner possesses it about style, Hemingway about flat conversations, and Mr. Krause and his peers about natural imagery. Perhaps it is really a good symptom in a national literature: we may have to endure the Dekkers to get the Donnes.

Mr. Tyler's Saints is cast in the form of a novel, but is really a brief Baedeker of the seventeenth-century search for God. Tyler himself is a young country squire of the 1640s, who sees a vision in the orchard and determines to find heaven. He meets Baxter, the saintly Puritan, accompanies Crashaw to Italy, and watches the martyrdom of Father Southworth. He finds all the accepted faiths wanting, however, and settles down to marriage and contemplation. Miss Bowen knows her period, writes well, and should please all who like their history gently tempered with imagination.

Young Doctor is a first novel that won a prize of £2,000—i.e., about fifty times as much as most first novelists expect to receive in royalties. It is all about a handsome young doctor in a small American town that looks like Zenith and behaves like Tyre and Sidon. The young doctor's soul (or rather body) is torn between a Dame aux Camelias and a Lady of Shalott, with virtue winning in the last round. If you like books that follow the wages of lust to their unpleasant end in caesarians and abortions, or enjoy reading about the sort of man of whom it can be said "His reward came at such times as when he had helped Gordon lift the skull from the brain of a boy who had been kicked by a horse," you will thoroughly appreciate this novel. Personally, I don't think it was really worth as much as Lawrence earned in five years.

JOHN MAIR

THE MODERN QUARTERLY

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A fourth leader in *The Times* the other day announced that the breeding station at Cambridge now produces standard rabbits—out of hutches, not hats. The writer proceeded to hold forth, with that "haugh-haugh" humour which characterises fourth leaders, on the perils of standardisation. With standard lamps, standard houses and standard streets, he said, a man will only get to his right home and his right bed by accident! ("Well, well," says Goss.)

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A VERY BLUE BOOK

Municipal Self-Government in Britain. G. M. HARRIS. *King.* 15s.

As a research lecturer on Public Administration and an alderman of Oxford city, Mr. Harris has had exceptional opportunities of studying both the theory and practice of Local Government. In *Municipal Self-Government in Britain* he poses the question: "Is the city council an organ of genuine self government? If so, how does it use this freedom?" And he bases his answer upon a personal investigation of the government of our ten largest cities, excluding London. Why he has not selected examples from the smaller boroughs he does not explain.

If the result is disappointing, the fault is not in the subject matter. In his study of Johannesburg Mr. J. R. Maud has shown how an academic study of local government can come alive. But Alderman Harris has reached years of discretion. In his anxiety to avoid invidious comparisons, he has completely failed to give any individualised pictures of the civic life of the cities he visited. To judge by its fruits, he has confined his investigations to the Municipal Handbooks, writings of his confrères and a few talks with "authoritative" persons; and he tells us not how those cities actually use their freedom, but how they use it on paper. I do not gain the impression, for instance, that he has studied Public Assistance in Liverpool at first hand; and it is disconcerting to find that he can deal with Leeds housing in one paragraph, without a reference to differential rents, and castigate tenants' associations in Glasgow without a reference to the property-owners' organisations. What is sound in his book has for the most part been published already; the rest is a string of personal opinions whose value I shall discuss later.

Within these limits, the book may be useful to students. It shows that, although the County Borough has undoubtedly become an executive organ of Central Government, it has not thereby lost all its freedom, and it successfully rebuts the charge that departmental interference is the cause of the decrease of freedom which it has suffered It is not the departments, but Parliament, it argues, which is jealous of an extension of their powers and forces them, with dubious chances of success, to incur the outrageous expense of Parliamentary Bills in order to do their job properly. Alderman Harris is careful always to ascribe the blame in this way to "Parliament." He might well have listed the names of the M.P.s who are so active in blocking the Municipalities' private Bills and succeeded yet again in 1938 in defeating the Enabling Bill. Though he states the fact that only Labour Members voted for the Bill, he does not draw the conclusion that Municipal self-government can never develop under a Tory Government.

Mr. Harris has a horror of party-politics. He sees that they cannot be eradicated from local government, but he laments over them, and in particular over the Labour Party. He wants all councillors and aldermen to be, like himself, independents interested solely in administration and judicial in their contempt for the wrong sectional interests. For him politics means Labour, and anyone who is not Labour is non-political. Compare for instance the following statements:

> To a considerable extent the representation of manual workers is through Trade-Union officials who, it may not unfairly be said, are not there primarily for the promotion of good municipal government, but to look after the interests of the members of their Union,

with this:

> Apart from the personal ability and experience of "big business men" . . . their interest in the good administration of the City is obviously very great.

Is this assessment of the relative integrity of business-men and Trade Union secretaries based on "personal investigation"? I doubt it. Mr. Harris simply assumes dishonesty among working people and honesty among the "upper classes." He brushes aside the notorious scandal of speculative builders and estate agents on Housing Committees in one egregious sentence:

> It is a question which can never be satisfactorily answered whether a man who is concerned in building development should, on account of his special knowledge and experience, be placed on the Housing Committee, or whether, for that very reason, he should be kept off it.

A real personal investigation might have given Alderman Harris a very satisfactory answer. His judgments are based not on investigation, but on a simple class bias.

> There are directions in which a bolder municipal policy might be of advantage to the community, but we may feel sure that these city councils, largely composed of the trading classes, are, *quite properly*, unlikely to take any steps which will injure local traders.

So now it is quite clear. The tradesman's meat is the Trade Union secretary's poison. A citizen's meeting, called by councillors to report on their work (p. 271) generally gives education biased in favour of Labour, but the Ratepayers' Associations are "a valuable means of education." In brief, how much nicer it would be to get rid of party politics and ensure that sensible business men had a monopoly of Council activity. Then, we should really get sound administration!

There is no doubt that this view is widespread. My only surprise is that Alderman Harris expresses it quite so frankly and pretends that it is the result of research. When he gets away from politics to discuss committee organisation, officials, or regionalism, he can make really useful suggestions, but in the main task of discussing the extent and use of civic freedom he is in the contradictory position of desiring the enlargement of municipal activity and decrying the party which fights for it; of clamouring for co-ordination of council committees, but railing against the party caucus through which the cabinet system could be introduced into local government and produce all the co-ordination he desires. It is typical of his frame of mind that, admitting the dominance of the trading interest, he wants to give the Borough Council the power to change its own constitution. This "freedom" might indeed be a highly convenient method of abolishing party-politics in cities where "independent" men have a majority.

There are some interesting details in this book. I learnt, for instance, that Hull's municipal telephone is the cheapest in the country. But even in matters of detail, Alderman Harris is not always reliable. He points out that the Watch Committee's appointment of a chief constable is not subject to approval from the Home Office, but does not add that his dismissal is. A more serious error occurs in his discussion of the relative merits of district audit by government official and audit by chartered accountants. He backs the district auditor and adds:

> it would seem obvious that, *if audit is to be of any value at all*, it must be independent and that is not the case where each borough appoints its own auditor. [My italics.]

Does Alderman Harris imply that the audit of a commercial firm's accounts is of no value at all, because the auditor is selected by the firm? The implication that all chartered accountants can be squared is too outrageous to consider seriously. Is it the result of "personal investigation" or of personal prejudice?

R. H. S. CROSSMAN

THREE DRAMATISTS

Air Raid. By ARCHIBALD MACLEISH. *Lane.* 3*s.* 6*d.*

Pastor Hall. By ERNST TOLLER. Translated by STEPHEN SPENDER. *Lane.* 5*s.*

Break-Up and Two Other Plays. By HELGE KROG. *Allen and Unwin.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

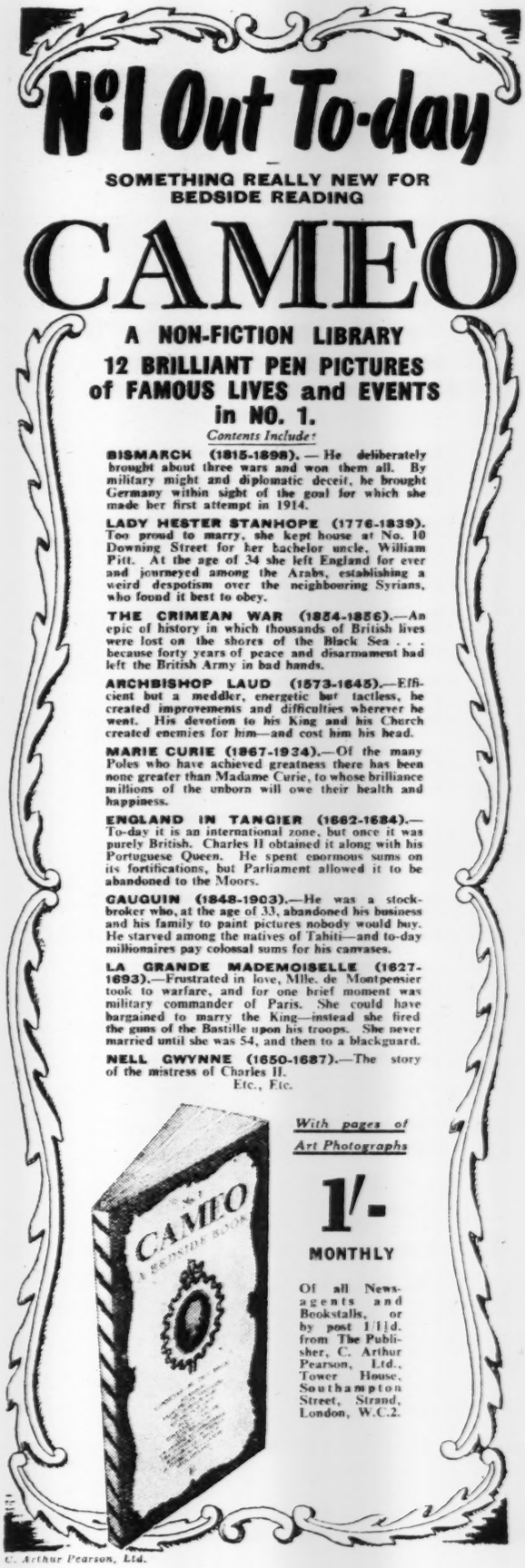
The subject of *Air Raid* is near enough at the moment to make it successful. Future wars *will* be broadcast—perhaps like a Test Match, as some Conservative has suggested—and these eye-witness accounts anticipating the event have a pungency. Mr. Macleish's verse play for broadcasting begins with the announcement that they are trying to get through to Europe, and after one or two false alarms they do get through. Voices from some undefined town filter through the microphone; people muttering in the morning, a boy listening to a sick woman who recalls wars of the past:

> They came when I was young once: I remember them.
> We smelled the smoke one morning in the alders,
> They had their tents by the stream in the water-meadow,
> I'd never eat the sausages. . . . I was the dainty one:
> I went to rinse my things in seven waters—
> Well-water: brook-water: rain. . . .
> I dried them on the gravel by the river.
> Even at night late they would smell of the sun on them. . . .
> I ate the watercress to make my mouth sweet. . . .
> They had blue capes on their coats with scarlet linings;
> They spoke together in another tongue:
> They were slow and soft in their speech with laughter and looking . . .

Then come the whistles, cries of "the bombers!" and "take to the cellars!"; as in *Bolero*, the tempo quickens, there is a certain monotony of excitement:

> Look! It's circling as a bird does!
> It circles as a hawk would circle hunting!
> It's hunting in under the roof: the room: the curtains!

Air Raid is in one sense a mechanical winner—it would go very well over the air, and I hope we shall be allowed to hear it in England. It is, too, genuinely simple as well as simplified, and its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LA GRANDE MADEMOISELLE (1627-1693).—Frustrated in love, Mlle. de Montpensier took to warfare, and for one brief moment was military commander of Paris. She could have bargained to marry the King—instead she fired the guns of the Bastille upon his troops. She never married until she was 54, and then to a blackguard.
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poetry is the most direct statement and exclamation, such as we have had before in documentaries. For reading, it may appear a little empty, and it is not to be compared with the far more elaborate *The Fall of the City*.

Toller had an intense and restless gift. *Pastor Hall* contains no innovations of technique but is a straightforward drama of a liberal clergyman who is sent to a concentration camp in Nazi Germany. Though the plot is orthodox and without surprises—the pastor is helped to escape against his will—it is again a play that rouses sympathies by its theme. Possibly not much more than a pale reflection of the Niemöller case, but the horrors of persecution are impressed in subtle ways. The storm-troop leader, who is trying to seduce the pastor's daughter as the price of her father's safety, reprimands a prisoner who has trodden on a flower-bed in the camp—"such careless brutality is not allowed here." He himself afterwards sentences the pastor to fifty lashes.

I had not heard of Helge Krog before reading these plays published by Allen and Unwin. He is a very capable minor dramatist, on the whole the best of these three and the most likely to succeed on the stage. He starts without the advantage of a ready-made attention and with the disadvantage of writing about a life foreign to us and more forcibly depicted by Ibsen. As post-Ibsen drama, his is perhaps a little tame: there is neither the same furious, tightly knotted situation, nor the symbolism and the depth of character. Yet the plays read well, and in the depiction of the vagaries of jealousy Krog achieves an occasionally touching and original effect. Possibly the most successful is the last, *On Life's Sunny Side*. A gentleman farmer marries a penniless girl and takes her to live in the country. There she paints spasmodically and badly, and won't let him invite her old friends. He feels that they are living on a desert island, and that it is only fair to both of them that she should meet other men to measure him by. So, as a surprise, he invites an old friend of hers down. There are complications, she is seen in a man's arms—but it turns out to be another friend, a harmless and promiscuous amorist no one minds. Hartwig and Esther are sympathetically drawn; there are minor characters, a charmingly dotty uncle, and a mother who would not disgrace *The Cherry Orchard*. G. W. STONIER

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HAMISH HAMILTON

THE MARGIN OF HISTORY

In the Margin of History. By L. B. NAMIER. *Macmillan.* *7s. 6d.*

Professor Namier, like Mr. F. A. Simpson, belongs to a genus that appears obsolescent—he is an historian with a style. Popular writers upon historical subjects, firing off their epigrams and daubing their bright colours, fail to be either good historians or good writers, while those who pride themselves upon being scientific seem to pride themselves also upon being unreadable. Professor Namier is a scientist when he collects his material, an artist when he presents it. In his new book, a collection of thirty-three papers reprinted from periodicals, he touches upon a variety of subjects—Diplomacy, French Policy since the War, the Polish Corridor, T. E. Lawrence (whom he knew well), Jewry, Zionism, Georgian figures like Hervey, Chesterfield and Torrington, Napoleon, and the Central European statesman who "floundered into the War." His comments are invariably interesting as well as informed. Let me give a few examples:

> Accurate evaluation correlated to a purpose was Napoleon's normal approach to human beings. He assessed but did not value them; was lavish in rewards and chary of praise; disparaging, but not prone to blame and still less to punish. He was a hard taskmaster, exhausting and discouraging; altogether inhuman. And, in turn, men with whom he was in close contact had little human feeling for him.

> Sated and sophisticated, civilised, sensitive and war-weary, the democracies have a conscience and no faith—the most dangerous condition for individuals and nations; and they encounter dictators, savage "revivalists" without a conscience or sensibility.

> The Baltic joins East Prussia to Pomerania, even while the Polish Corridor intervenes between them; whereas without access to the sea Poland would be deprived of her main and most natural connection with the outer world and of the freedom which is secured by it. The cutting through of the Corridor has meant a minor amputation for Germany; its closing up would mean strangulation for Poland.

The essay on Diplomacy, Secret and Open, is particularly good. "Publicity destroys the freedom of negotiations. Every word said in public is apt to commit the negotiator. This makes him over-cautious and leaves little scope for tentative proposals. . . The attempts of decent negotiators to find just solutions are seldom helped by public discussion and agitation." Professor Namier illustrates the unwisdom of politicians negotiating directly instead of through diplomatists, by a quotation from Philippe de Commynes:

> Et deux grans princes qui se vouldroient bien entreaymer ne se devroyent jamais veoir, mais envoyer bonnes gens et sages les ungs vers les autres, et ceulx-la les entretiendroient ou amanderoient les faultes.

Sometimes Professor Namier allows his impatience to overcome his logic:

> In 1914 a certain school of pacifists professed to detect the origin of the war in our *entente* with France and in alleged secret military and naval commitments entered into by Great Britain. In reality the war broke out over the Jugo-Slav fears of the Habsburg Monarchy and its Balkan policy; and if there was a contributory cause in Western Europe, this was to be found in the German hope that we should remain neutral—in other words, not in the existence, but in the uncertainty, of our commitments to France.

But surely this uncertainty was in part due to the secrecy of our commitments; if Parliament had been told of these commitments, Cabinet Ministers would not have assured the Germans that we should not fight. The secrecy observed by Sir Edward Grey not only deserves condemnation but constitutes a warning for the present.

The paper on the Jews in the Modern World is eloquent and moving:

> The question which the Jews must now ask themselves is whether they can, and should, assume the responsibility for bringing Jewish children into the world in the Galuth, to face a fate which seems to become worse every year.

(The "Galuth" means the Gentile countries.)

> Unless the half-life of these long centuries can be changed at last into an integral national existence, had it not better come to an end? Whatever will there is in us for Jewish revival must now be focused on the common national future.

In his enthusiasm for the idea of Jewry as a nation, Professor Namier seems to disregard the danger of this idea to the Jewish citizens of Great Britain, France and the United States. "As a nation," Professor Namier writes, "we have no firm ground under our

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feet; man cannot live outside a community, but he is truly safe in his own community only—it has to be his own in the fullest, completest sense." But if Professor Namier does not feel that this country is his own community, then he is different, I am convinced, from most other English Jews. The peril for them latent in such doctrines does not require further emphasis.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

FRIVOLOUS DETECTION

The Vernon Mystery. By H. C. BAILEY. *Gollancz.* 7s. 6d.
The Mystery of Martha's Vineyard. By GEORGE DYER. *Heinemann.* 7s. 6d.
Banbury Bog. By PHOEBE ATWOOD TAYLOR. *Collins.* 7s. 6d.
No Wind of Blame. By GEORGETTE HEYER. *Hodder and Stoughton.* 7s. 6d.
Whose Corpse? By STEPHEN RANSOME. *Peter Davies.* 7s. 6d.
Some Buried Caesar. By REX STOUT. *Collins.* 7s. 6d.
Green for Danger. By GAVIN HOLT. *Gollancz.* 7s. 6d.
Shadows Before. By DOROTHY BOWERS. *Hodder and Stoughton.* 7s. 6d.
The Man Who Didn't Answer. By INEZ OELLRICHS. *Peter Davies.* 7s. 6d.
Murder to Hounds. By EDWARD ACHESON. *Harrap.* 7s. 6d.

We may deplore the dearth of serious detection nowadays, but it must be faced. Either the authors cannot be bothered to invent the necessary brain-teasers, or the public can't be bothered to read them. Whatever the reason—personally I suspect a contemporary drift from intellectual to emotional satisfactions—most of the modern detective stuff depends for its appeal on the trimmings and not on the crime. The emphasis of criticism must be shifted, and we must judge the current output on its ornamental qualities, not on its structural stability.

In general it will be admitted that technical progress has been most marked in the handling of the love interest. No longer are all the heroines a sickly blend of school-girl complexions and Victorian upbringing. Miss Sayers sent her heroine to Oxford, and others have followed her lead. The girls can now drink, flirt and become uncommonly good at games. In return, the young men are allowed to take a few more liberties with them and drop the Galahad pose. It is no longer obligatory to skip the romantic part of a detective story as being pure padding; sometimes it is the most entertaining feature of a book, *vide* Miss Sayers.

But the most remarkable, albeit questionable, innovation is the use of a murder plot as a vehicle for roaring fun. The old masters of detection occasionally permitted a mildly humorous intonation to lighten their solemnity, but the modern school go all out for their laughs. Half the American detectives and a growing percentage of English advance to their objectives behind a creeping barrage of wisecracks. The Dr. Watsons of to-day are chosen, not for their courage in the service of the Queen on the heights of Dargai, but because of their successful resemblance to music-hall knockabout artistes.

These reflections on the present state of detection are prompted by contemplation of the list under review. All are readable, some are very amusing, but not one of them is a sound detective problem, judged by the standards of fifteen years ago. Mr. H. C. Bailey has always been able to get away with a thin plot by wrapping it in a superior, sophisticated manner. *The Vernon Mystery* is a full-length novel built round the material for a short story. Admittedly three crimes are committed in the small town of Bousford (conveniently situated close to the moors), but the evidence made available to the reader would not suffice to hang a dog. After some jolly camping on the moors, a visit to Oxford, small-town tea parties, endless quarrelsome love-making, plenty of Clunk's deputy and a modicum of Clunk, a lucky accident betrays the criminal. Readers are expected to love Clunk, because he is so mealy-mouthed and so wicked. I reserve my enthusiasm for Mr. Bailey, who manages by a string of inconsequential remarks, no semicolons and lashings of full-stops, to impose an illusion of brisk eventfulness.

The Mystery of Martha's Vineyard does not even pretend to be a mystery. The plot is that of a thriller, with villainy unmasked but menacing, yet the easy, natural tone in which Mr. Dyer thwarts a dastardly plot to ruin the American Navy robs the melodrama of its crudity. I far prefer cruising off Cape Cod in imagination, to landing on its criminal coast. And the couple of young sleuths have a delightful time sailing up and down Vineyard Sound in a yawl, while from an armchair we can follow their adventures with the aid of an Admiralty chart conveniently provided on the end papers. Still, even the handiest little yawls have their home ports, and when we go ashore, on the Cape, Miss Taylor sends old Asey Mayo to meet us in *Banbury Bog*. The trouble with Asey is that he never really is in trouble: he could open the Bank of England with a toothpick if Miss Taylor told him to. One gets so resigned to his prepotence that I felt quite shocked when his car got a puncture. Nobody can deny that Asey knows his job on the Cape—to scurry up and down like a good retriever and finally emerge from the fog with an unsympathetic character on whom his mistress can saddle the crime. He does this three or four times a year now, having got considerably quicker at it.

Miss Heyer writes novels with crime in them; sometimes very good, sometimes not so good. *No Wind of Blame* is not so good because Miss Heyer introduces a tricky murder into her gay skit on the climbing attitudes of retired actresses in county society. The trickiness of the murder is the weakness: it is not subtle enough to hoodwink the average reader, but it occupies the authoress for a terrible time, trying to palm off her scientific explanation. But once you resolve to skip the details of detection, the rest of the book will be found very amusing. *Whose Corpse?* is meant to make up in excitement what it lacks in coherence. Who fired a rifle from a hotel window in New York? And who was the man on the pavement opposite who was killed? This sort of riddle excites authors and publishers far more than it does their ultimate public. Mr. Ransome writes fast, slick, emphatic chapters one after another, but his punch cannot go home, since it has no home to go to.

Some Buried Caesar and *Green for Danger* are such rollicking farces that it would be a shame to consider them seriously. Caesar was a prize bull who was going to be barbecued for an advertisement, only he came to an untimely end. Nero Wolfe, the detective, is fat, greedy, and not funny. His henchman, Archie, is pretty smooth with his cracks. Mr. Gavin Holt is content to be funny about secret processes and international spies, but I found his jokes did not string along as well as Mr. Rex Stout's.

Shadows Before and *The Man Who Didn't Answer* are intended as serious detection. Miss Bowers has a genuine conception of a plot, but has not yet developed the technique to handle it convincingly. She wishes to juggle with so many motives and characters at once that some slip to the ground without her noticing. Her intentions, however, are admirable; and *Shadows Before* is full of bright ideas. Miss Oellrichs chooses a milkman for her detective, because it was the milkman who waved to a man at five o'clock in the morning and the man didn't wave back. So the man couldn't have been Pete. So Pete couldn't be guilty of the murder. So the milkman must save Pete from being executed for a murder he didn't commit. It is a logical enough sequence, but a dull one, as there is a singular dearth of further evidence, while the milkman has to keep going his rounds throughout his investigation. *The Man Who Didn't Answer* is meritorious, but too prolix.

A comical Captain in the British Army, who goes fox-hunting in Virginia and runs the body of an American politician to earth either makes or mars *Murder to Hounds*. The Captain tends to whistle Lillibulero, and the rest of his character is in keeping, so you have been warned—Captain Rode Ahead.

RALPH PARTRIDGE

POLAND

Poland: Key to Europe. By RAYMOND LESLIE BUELL. *Cape.* 10s. 6d.

As an ally in a war which we do not yet see how to avoid, Poland will now be interesting to many people for whom it has hitherto been, like Czechoslovakia, only "a distant country of whom we knew nothing." To those who wish to understand this country, which is neither democratic nor Fascist, which is intensely nationalist, Catholic with a difference, brave, war-like and poverty-stricken, Mr Buell's book is an admirable introduction. Impartiality and objectivity are the most commonly ascribed characteristics to Americans writing on European countries; Mr. Buell deserves them. He realises that Poland has had a past of which it is immensely proud and describes the period in which Poland regarded herself as the centre of freedom in a world of tyrannies; he traces the story of Poland's patriotic struggle for national freedom down to the present day.

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ounded by John Middleton Murray, now edited by Max Plowman, is in its 16th year of continuous publication. The July issue contains a special

32 PAGE SUPPLEMENT

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by M. D. PETRE **80** *pages*

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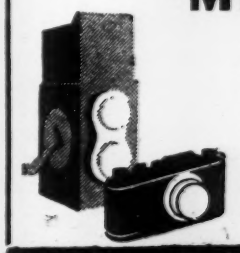

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Candidates must have attained the age of 23 on August 12th, 1939, but must not have attained 30 years of age on that date, although candidates who have served, or are serving, in the Navy, Army or Air Force may deduct from their actual age for this purpose any time during which they have so served, but not exceeding five years.

Preference will be given to candidates who have had a University training, and who possess knowledge and practical experience in archaeology, especially of the Mediaeval period.

Applications will be scrutinised by the Office of Works in association with the Civil Service Commissioners and the candidates who appear to be best qualified will be summoned to an interview before a Selection Board who will recommend for the vacancies existing those candidates who appear to them most suitable.

Application to be made not later than August 12th, 1939, on a form to be obtained by *postcard* from the Establishment Officer, H.M. Office of Works, Westminster, S.W.1.

APPOINTMENTS VACANT & WANTED —continued

DICK SHEPPARD MEMORIAL CLUB, Binney St., W.1. Warden wanted, in sympathy with Dick Sheppard's ideals. No restaurant responsibility. Can only offer 30s. per week. Apply in writing to PAUL GLIDDON.

THE Wardenship of Currock Community Centre, Carlisle, will shortly be vacant. Details from DAVID THOMSON, Currock House, Carlisle.

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He fully recognises Pilsudski's qualities, but does not hide that the war that he forced on Russia in 1920 was a crime :

> Despite immense misery through a country already devastated by the World War, despite starvation and typhus, Pilsudski decided to launch an offensive war against the Soviet Ukraine.

That war nearly resulted in the destruction of the newly-made Polish State. The blame for this disastrous period, however, belongs to the Allied Powers as much as to Poland. As Mr. Buell says :

> Had the Allies been willing to make peace with Russia and immediately recognise the Soviet regime, rather than attempt to overthrow it, Poland would undoubtedly have done so without wasting two years in war.

Mr. Buell provides a careful examination of the economic system of Poland, explaining the extraordinary part which the State now plays in Polish industry ; and he deals fairly with the question of Minorities and with the agricultural problem. On the political situation of Poland he is particularly interesting. Poland, he points out, " is one country in post-war Europe which has completed its Great Man cycle." It has got rid of a parliament in favour of a leader ; the leader is dead and there is no one to take his place. " His régime was a personal régime ; he did not found a system." Mr. Buell urges that Poland still has time to escape the Fascist danger which threatens all eastern and south-eastern Europe. Poland has too many Minorities, is too firmly Catholic and dislikes the Germans too much to be assimilated in the Reich. But if her resistance is to be successful, the Government must, as Mr. Buell insists, " broaden its base soon, otherwise lack of confidence—leading to demagogic dictatorship—may result." The curse of Poland is still its almost feudal class structure. We may believe, in the long run, that its hope lies in its peasant party, but the danger to Poland is the same danger that threatens many other countries—that the upper-class fear of the common people may weaken the national resistance to the enemy of both.

TOM PAINE

ON THE ANVIL OF TIME

Journal Under the Terror, 1938. By F. L. LUCAS. *Cassell.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

It is an account of the author's almost daily life during last year. He wishes, and we all wish, that some Roman had left us such a journal in the crumbling Empire of Honorius or Valentinian, while he watched the tides of barbarism lap higher and higher against the dykes of the civilised world. It would not replace Gibbon, but how it would supplement him ! For that purpose Mr. Lucas set himself to supplement the narrative of some future historian who has taken for his subject the main events of the critical year we last lived through. He shows what effects (Americans would say what " reactions ") those events had upon the heart and mind of the author as they followed each other one by one during those days of " The Terror." He shows us how horrible and humiliating were those effects upon a true and proud lover of this country, and at the same time how daily life went on for himself and his friends both in Cambridge, where he is a Fellow of King's, and in the finest scenes and peoples among which it has long been his habit to wander in guise little better than a native tramp's. For he is at home in every land, and most at home among the labourers.

Since the Great War (we may still call it " Great " though overwhelmed by the prospect of a greater) he has become well-known as one of our finest scholars in English, French, and Greek literature. Severely wounded and gassed on the Somme, he returned to Cambridge, where his reputation grew rapidly. Deeply impressed by an article in one of our reviews, I once wrote to the Editor asking, " Who is this F. L. Lucas ? " and my ignorance was laughed to scorn. He is indeed conspicuous among scholars for his poetic mind. Such scholar-poets arise among us from time to time, but they are as few as welcome. One may notice also that such natures are likely to be much occupied with the outside world as seen in politics and the life of the working people. One need recall only Byron, Shelley, Browning, Swinburne, Matthew Arnold and Morris, all poets and scholars, though perhaps professors might not think them all great scholars. Of Mr. Lucas's wide and retentive scholarship such works as *Studies, French and English*, *From Olympus to the Styx*, and his selections from the Greek Anthology are evidence, while for his more directly poetic side we have his own verses and rhythmical translations, besides the brief pictures collected as *The Woman Clothed with the Sun* and that deeply pathetic novel, *Doctor Dido*, narrating scenes in Cambridge and France during the French Revolution.

Once in the present Journal the author blames himself as " too versatile " ; but to those whose interests in the passing world have been active and various, this versatility gives a special charm to an enthralling book. Mingled with the hideous records of German brutality and of cruelties in other European countries that rival even the German, we find literary criticisms founded on the writer's unusual knowledge, and portraits, seldom flattering, of our most prominent persons, whether politicians or journalists. There are also beautiful accounts of the wild and unmechanised countries which he traversed on foot with his seemingly indefatigable wife. Of him certainly it is true that Nature did never yet betray the heart that loved her. Some philosopher once said that bodily exertion can wipe out even sin, and we feel that even by walking far around the flat and unknown villages of Cambridge, Mr. Lucas has sometimes gained a calm resignation almost akin to hope, even when outward events threatened national shame and humiliation. It recalled to him, as it has often recalled to myself, that passage in Emerson when, coming out from some indignation meeting, he heard the stars saying, " So hot, my little sir ? "

But think with what cumulative blows that year of the Terror must have struck a nature so incapable of barbarism, so sensitive to the abomination of cruelty, so enthusiastic for the very idea of freedom, whenever it has too briefly appeared in ancient Greece or within the long and toilsome history of our own country ! Each month in this Journal we watch blow following blow on fate's anvil—the bloody purge of officers in Berlin, the septic influence of Ribbentrop, drawing his estimate of the English nature from the most contemptible group of English society ; the bloody purge of officials in Russia ; the German occupation of the ancient and beautiful land of Austria. It was in that month of March that the author published his Swiftian pamphlet called *The Delights of Dictatorship*, and wrote in his Journal :

> Russia is busy continuing a civil war in her law-courts. Roumania has gone Fascist. The Little Entente is split. Step by step Austria descends the boa-constrictor's throat. Garvin is busy offering Czechoslovakia to the Reich. We talk of credits to the assassin of Abyssinia. And in Spain, in spite of vain heroism of flesh and blood, the machine grinds its way back into Teruel.

That was in March, and in April the Dictators met in Rome. It was not till September that, amid the hysterical applause of our simple-hearted, trustful and unimaginative people, the consummation of our national humiliation was accomplished at Munich. " We have sold the Czechs for six months' grace," the Journal writes on September 3rd, " and a disgrace that will last as long as history."

It is a melancholy tale, rendered only more pathetic by a thin line of private grief that runs through the later months. But he refuses to sulk or mope or even to complain. " *Les honnêtes gens ne boudent pas*," as he quotes from some quiet observer. At the end of the year he writes :

> Four times in four years we have refused the legitimate means of self-defence to the weaker victims of a loathsome and cold-blooded aggression. We have destroyed the honour of our country, as we have destroyed its beauty, while paying lip-loyalty to both. . . . But it is better to remember the enduring decency of commoner men—of the men I commanded in the War ; of the servants I have had ; of Marie Mauron's peasants of Provence ; of the simple folk we watched this September coming so quietly and bravely to the colours among the vineyards of Alsace, the valleys of Lorraine.

Perhaps after all throughout the country we have had enough " grousing." *Les honnêtes gens ne boudent pas*, and the writer ends with this thin line of hope.

HENRY W. NEVINSON

Glimpses of World History. By JAWAHARLAL NEHRU. *Lindsay Drummond.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

There are rare people like Cervantes and Bunyan whose creative gifts are released or strengthened by solitude and confinement. Jawaharlal Nehru, one of the bravest, most cultivated and disinterested men of our time, has spent eleven years in Indian gaols and, like these great men of letters, found solace and occupation in writing. But he does not claim great artistic gifts ; he is a politician and his writing takes the form of long letters to his daughter about world history. He reviews the book himself when he writes in his Preface :

> Prison-life has its advantages ; it brings both leisure and a measure of detachment. But the disadvantages are obvious. There are no libraries or reference books at the command of the prisoner, and, under these conditions, to write on any subject, and especially history,

London Amusements

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HIS MAJESTY'S. The Devil to Pay. July 26

PALACE. Under Your Hat. Tues. & Thurs.

PICCADILLY. Spring Meeting. Wed., Sat.

QUEEN'S. Dear Octopus. Wed. & Sat.

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FIESTA

MEET YOUR FRIENDS on Saturday, July 15th, at the Great Open-Air Fiesta (3–11). King Alfred School, Golders Green (near station). Non-stop entertainment. Side Shows. Market, etc. Children's crèche. 1s. 6d., children half price.

PERSONAL

FOR those who are not quite able to deal with normal life, a real home with understanding and experienced care, on psychological lines is offered in beautiful country house.—Drs. references. Box 5476.

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APPARENTLY no more bombs in Marylebone, so ANTHONY PANTING, Portrait Photographer, is returning to town, 5 Paddington Street, W.1. Welbeck 4950.

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RECITAL OF RECORDS
Readers of "The New Statesman and Nation" are invited to a recital of records on the new Davey Electrical Reproducers on Wednesday, July 26th, from 8 p.m.—10.30 p.m. An illustrated catalogue of these instruments, which cost from £17 10s., is available on request for those who cannot come to the demonstration. E.M.G. HAND-MADE GRAMOPHONES, LIMITED, 21 Grape Street, W.C.2. TEM. 7166-7. (Grape Street is off New Oxford Street, just behind the Princes Theatre.)

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is a foolhardy undertaking. A number of books came to me, but they could not be kept. They came and went. Twelve years ago, however, when, in common with large numbers of my countrymen and countrywomen, I started my pilgrimages to prison, I developed the habit of making notes of the books I read. My note-books grew in number and they came to my rescue when I started writing. Other books of course helped me greatly, among them inevitably, H. G. Wells' *Outline of History*. But the lack of good reference books was very real, and because of this the narrative had often to be slurred over, or particular periods skipped.

The letters are personal and there are many intimate touches in them which were meant for my daughter alone. I do not know what to do about them, for it is not easy to take them out without considerable effort. I am therefore leaving them untouched.

To this little need be added except that the history is full of his personality and that the personal touches are full of humour, courage and sense.

Germany and a Lightning War. By FRITZ STERNBERG. *Faber.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

Mr. Sternberg's analysis of the economic positions of the different Powers, of their relative war potentials and strategic situations, was acknowledged when it first appeared as a carefully documented and well-reasoned study. It was written before the surrender of Czechoslovakia. Mr. Sternberg's conclusion then was that Hitler was in a position to wage a lightning war, but not to maintain a war as long as the next war would actually demand. He has now added a very informative chapter, dealing with the change in the situation as a result of the seizure of Czechoslovakia, which he holds in many respects to have been less favourable to Germany than is generally assumed. Czechoslovakia brings new economic problems to Germany as well as material assets, and it brings too a population not susceptible to the propaganda of Dr. Goebbels. He assumes that the seizure of Prague will mean that Germany must fight on two fronts and that Soviet Russia will be involved on the side of Great Britain and France. On this assumption, he prophesies a complete collapse of the National Socialist regime.

BOOKS TO COME

Captain Liddell Hart's important new book, *The Defence of Britain*, coming this week from Faber and Faber, was written and prepared for publication at high pressure. Unfinished at the beginning of June, it was in the hands of the publishers by the end of the month and rushed through the press within a fortnight. Dealing, as he does, with the international crisis and the measures urgently needed for the defence not merely of Great Britain but of European civilisation, the author wished his conclusions to reach the public at the earliest possible moment. Unlike Captain Liddell Hart's two previous books, which were based on published material, the present book has been specially written for the occasion. Some sections of it are drawn from a series of hitherto unpublished memoranda prepared by the author at successive stages of the crisis. *The Defence of Britain* is a review of the whole problem of defence: an antidote to the piecemeal type of thinking in which our leading statesmen indulge.

Mr. Pat Sloan's new, highly topical, volume, *Russia, Friend or Foe?* coming from Muller at the end of July, is an analysis of Soviet foreign policy from 1917 to 1939. Is Russia reliable in a war? Will she come to an agreement with Hitler or with the democratic countries? Is it desirable for Britain to ally herself with a Communist State?

Muller is also publishing on July 20th a most unusual diary-autobiography by an original person who earns his daily bread bicycling from place to place and picking up dropped coins on the road. Mr. John Sowerby, the author of *I Got on my Bicycle*, lives comfortably on about 5*s.* a week. Years ago, he was supposed to be a dying man, but although he has to spend part of each year in hospital, he is able to cycle about England for the rest of the year, attending to his "work." On one occasion, his specialist suggested that he should send in his own reports on his health. These proved so remarkable that they were sent to the editor of the London *Mercury*, who published a selection. As a result, Mr. Sowerby was presently enabled to buy a much needed new bicycle on which it is his habit to visit his publisher. His book is full of invaluable information about the different prices of a cup of tea in neighbouring districts and the varying quality of buns and cheap snacks.

Mrs. Mona Tait, the author of a Far-Eastern travel book, *Menacing Sun*, to be published by Murray on July 25th, has spent twelve years in the East, mostly in Tokyo, and found herself in Shanghai as a newspaper correspondent at the beginning of the Sino-Japanese war. Mrs. Tait's political curiosity gives topical importance to her descriptions and has led her to inquire in some detail into the Imperialist designs of Japan and to make comparisons between different types of colonial administration. From Shanghai, she proceeds to Indo-China, Siam, Malaya, Java, Ceylon and India, studying on her journey Siam's interesting democratic development, Carm-Ranh, France's new naval base, the Japanese movements in the Trengganu mines, and the strength of Singapore.

Mr. Martin Secker, returning to an eighteenth-century practice, has just opened a bookshop—the Unicorn—at his premises at 8 Charles II Street, S.W.1. In the present century, this is an innovation, although there are of course booksellers in the provinces who publish books. It is an intimate bookshop, where customers will not be overwhelmed by a vast miscellaneous collection of volumes; where they may examine books at leisure but where they will be able to obtain expert guidance if they want it. Mr. Secker will specialise in *belles lettres* and other books of an outstanding kind. The shop will not interfere in any way with his regular publishing business. He is issuing on July 26th a book of reminiscences by a solicitor, *These Meddlesome Attorneys*. The author, Mr. Edward H. Bell, has not merely many stories to tell of legal and literary personalities, but has also some controversial suggestions to make for the drastic reform of legal procedure.

Those who have studied metaphysics at Oxford under the guidance of Professor R. G. Collingwood, of Pembroke, now Waynflete Professor of Metaphysical Philosophy, will remember him as a most stimulating lecturer and tutor. Sometimes snubbing, sometimes encouraging, he was always willing to be deflected from the subject of a tutorial. "One must accept the Universe," he argued irritably on one occasion when defending a young visitor to Oxford who was bored by the architecture but enthusiastically interested in the Knickerbocker Glories at Stewarts. His *Speculum Mentis* was a metaphysical work of great liveliness and humanity. The Oxford University Press will publish Professor Collingwood's autobiography on July 20th—"the autobiography of a man whose business is thinking."

MARIE SCOTT-JAMES

GRAMOPHONE NOTES

ONE of the functions of the gramophone is to preserve for the future all that is most valuable in the musical activities of our time, and generally speaking the companies show a proper sense of their responsibilities in this direction. Most of the major works of the outstanding composers of our time—Elgar, Strauss, Delius, Walton, Sibelius (to name a few)—have been recorded in performances either conducted by the composer or sanctioned by him as an adequate realisation of his intentions. Nor have our finest executive artists been neglected; there is plenty of evidence to enable posterity to decide whether Gigli was really a great tenor or Schnabel a great pianist. At first sight, Toscanini's art also seems to be well represented; the list of his records is fairly long and representative. But examine the list and listen to the records, and you will find the situation to be less satisfactory than it appears. Some of them date from ten years ago; quite half the remainder were recorded recently in America; and those who take a critical interest in the gramophone repertory know how disastrous the standard of Victor's orchestral recording has become. Of Toscanini's Victor records none approach the everyday level of European reproduction, still less the marvellous standard which Sir Thomas Beecham exacts as a matter of course from Columbia. Shallow, raucous, lacking in bass and with every technical disadvantage known to the studio, these records are only tolerable because for certain works (e.g., Beethoven's *Seventh Symphony*) Toscanini is immeasurably the greatest living conductor and no other souvenir of his electrifying performances is available. But some of them are so bad that they are not worth having as a gift: the *Siegfried Idyll* was a case in point, and the recently issued Mozart *Symphony in G minor* is another. I do not propose to waste time on this lacerating production, but I must express my surprise at the comment of the *Gramophone* reviewer, who calls the recording "among the best Toscanini has had." It would be interesting to know what gramophone he was using when he arrived at this verdict. The standard version of the symphony remains that conducted by Beecham for Columbia.

To return to Toscanini. In view of his enormous popularity, I think H.M.V. might show more enterprise in recording him. Everybody was disappointed that his incomparable performance of Verdi's *Requiem* a year or so back was not recorded, and this year I understand that neither the Beethoven *Mass in D* nor the *Ninth Symphony* has been done. True, choral recording is still a little tricky, but we should be satisfied with a Toscanini *Mass* or *Ninth* as good as the choral portions of the Dresden *Meistersinger* set. Besides the American *Seventh*, only Beethoven's *First* and *Sixth Symphonies* have been recorded by him; and it is above all in the *Third*, *Fifth*, *Seventh* and *Ninth* that his blazing genius finds its greatest outlet. After Beethoven, the composer to whom Toscanini is temperamentally most akin is Verdi: we badly need a complete *Otello* or *Falstaff* under his direction. Mention of Verdi reminds me of the Glyndebourne performance of *Macbeth*, which I have no hesitation in describing as the finest performance of an opera I have ever seen. It is a tragedy that this production

Holiday Suggestions

London

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South

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South—continued

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South West

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North West

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Holiday Suggestions Continued on Page 126

is likely to be dropped from the Glyndebourne repertory without the recording of a single note; for it is particularly strong just where so many Glyndebourne productions have been weak—namely, in the quality of the solo singing. This year the company possesses, in Margherita Grandi, a Lady Macbeth of genius, the greatest dramatic soprano of the Italian school heard in this country since the war. It is difficult to believe that a complete recording of the great Sleepwalking Scene by this superb singer would not justify itself commercially, and I beg the Gramophone Company, while there is still time, to consider making one.

The most interesting of the month's orchestral records is a set of three H.M.V.s containing Debussy's *Nocturnes* played by the Paris Conservatoire Orchestra conducted by Piero Coppola. Each *Nocturne* occupies a single record, and all are recorded to perfection: the lovely study in dissolving greys and silvers called *Nuages*, the brilliant, intensely visual *Fêtes* " with its blending of music and luminous dust," and the final *Sirènes*, with its wordless female chorus, which never seems quite so successful as the other two. The whole triptych is to be counted, no less than the pictures of Manet and Renoir, among the glories of French impressionism, and its delicate tones have suffered the minimum of distortion in this recording. A greater contrast could hardly be imagined than Schumann's *Fourth Symphony in D minor* which Bruno Walter and the L.S.O. record on three H.M.V. discs; here rhythmic monotony and thick, clumsy orchestration almost disguise from the casual listener the inherent beauty of much of the music. The first movement is pretty hopeless, the semiquaver idea being far too persistently worked; but the brief *Romance* and *Scherzo*, which are complete on a single record, are captivating; and the *finale* is full of good things, notably a jaunty second subject which would be delicious if it were more lightly scored. I get the impression that Walter has made none of those alterations in the scoring which are recommended by Weingartner and Tovey; so that the symphony, though quite well recorded, often sounds muddy in texture. Now that the Ormandy set has been deleted, this is the only available version except for a very old Columbia issue also conducted by Walter. Extremely brilliant is a single H.M.V. of *Salome's Dance* from Strauss's opera played by the Dresden Orchestra under Karl Böhm; but how shoddy the music has begun to seem, with its surface orientalism and occasional swoops into Viennese waltz rhythms. Two Columbias containing a suite from *Carmen* played by the L.P.O. and conducted by Beecham capture, as no recent performance of the opera has done, all the Mediterranean warmth and vivacity which so understandably went to Nietzsche's head.

The most notable chamber music of the month comes from Decca. The Boyd Neel String Orchestra make a single record of that wonderful Bach *Ricercare a sei voci* which forms part of the *Musical Offering* which he sent to Frederick the Great after their famous meeting a few years before the composer's death. The fine chromatic theme is, I believe, Frederick's, and it has inspired Bach to some of his richest and most passionate polyphony. An H.M.V. record of the music by Edwin Fischer's Chamber Orchestra has long been popular, and I find it difficult to decide between the merits of the two discs: there are some small differences in the lay-out of the music for the string parts. Another single Decca contains a meritorious performance by the Kathleen Washbourne String Trio of Webern's Op. 21 *Trio*: meritorious, because it must need a lot of enthusiasm to tackle music which is a closed book to 999 out of every thousand listeners. It is strictly atonal, though whether it is written in one of the Schönbergian " tone-rows " is more than I can say on the evidence of my ears alone. Nor can I detect any thematic material, but only a series of unconnected notes, which might as well be played *cancrizans*: the element of design seems wholly absent from this music. A *String Trio* by Jean Françaix is very much more accessible: it is recorded by the Philharmonic Trio on the small Deccas and, like the Webern, costs only four shillings complete. This young pupil of Nadia Boulanger has abundant talent and a truly French sense of form; his fault at present is a tendency to chatter, to play with little rhythmic formulas until we are tired of them. This is most noticeable in the quick movements; his *andante* is charming. Messrs. Lener and Kentner follow up their successful " *Spring* " *Sonata* records with another Beethoven, the *A major*, Op. 30, No. 1 (three Columbias): the first two movements represent Beethoven in his most grave and lyrical mood, the third is a dullish set of Variations. Performance and recording very happy. The violinist Natan Milstein gives a fluent account of Tartini's " Devil's Trile " Sonata (two Cols.) which makes the Devil appear even milder than usual; there is more dash in Menuhin's records, but they are comparatively old. Kilenyi however is both dashing and demonic in the Liszt *Mephisto Waltz* (two small Cols.), a piece which I prefer in its original orchestral form: the recording is not up to the level of Kilenyi's playing. A single Parlophone contains Mozart's subtle, pathetic *Adagio in B minor* (K.540) played with the utmost simplicity by Lili Kraus. But the simplicity, both of performance and composition, is deceptive; there are deep waters.

The glorious *Otello* Love Duet is well sung by Ralf and Lemnitz, but (and for me it is a big but) in German. The best *sung* Italian version is the Parlophone Pattiera-Seinemeyer; the best *recorded* the Columbia Merli-Muzio. Richard Tauber makes a fairly good Parlophone of Don Ottavio's two arias from *Don Giovanni*: " Dulla sua pace " is the better, " Il mio tesoro " being far behind McCormack's classic version in ease and fluency. Hildegard Erdmann, a soprano with almost a choir-boy quality, makes a touching H.M.V. record of the " Ihr habt nun Traurigkeit " section of Brahms's *German Requiem*: the thrice-repeated " Wiedersehen " at the end is lovely. Decca issue Wotan's *Farewell and the Fire Music* from *Die Walküre* sung by that fine baritone Wilhelm Rode; this is actually a Polydor record made some ten years ago, but still worth having for Rode's very individual handling of the vocal part. His voice is on the light side for Wotan, but its curiously intellectual timbre, which made him so remarkable a Sachs, always appeals to me. DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR

Week-end Competitions

No. 489

Set by T. W. Earp

A first prize of Two Guineas and a second prize of Half a Guinea are offered for the best poem for *The Bad Child's Book of Insects*, in not more than 16 lines.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, July 21st.

2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.

3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 487

Set by Anna Sewall

The usual prizes of Two Guineas and Half a Guinea are offered for a parody on articles which might be written for the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION by (1) G. W. Stonier on any subject; (2) Desmond MacCarthy on the theatre; (3) Y. Y. on any subject; (4) V. Sackville-West on Country Notes; (5) David Garnett on Books in General.

No entry to exceed 300 words in length.

Report by Anna Sewall

An analysis of the entries for this competition, to which the response was not very large, works out as follows: Y. Y., 12; V. Sackville-West, 11; G. W. Stonier, 6; Desmond MacCarthy, 4; David Garnett, 3; Critic, 1. The two NEW STATESMAN AND NATION contributors who drew the most fire also proved the two best adapted to parody. The sophisticated urbanity of Desmond MacCarthy defeated all competitors; David Garnett did not fare very well except at the hands of Cassandra Rollin (" Ought we to judge such a play except by Elizabethan standards ? I think not "). Critic obtained one entry unasked for, A. P-R's; the savage bite of G. W. Stonier produced another good entry from A. P-R (" The prophets have always shared with the poets an aggressively forceful manner of speech "), and a good one from G. H. Bedwell, who became a runner-up. C. M. Hibbert contributed an amusing mix-up of the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION staff visiting the Elysian Fields, which although not coming strictly into the terms of the competition as set, greatly entertained the setter of the competition.

Y. Y. came out of it very well. His rambling charm was well reproduced (" The thought occurred to me, as these thoughts have to do from week to week."—P. S. " What, after all, could be a better place

for dictators than the Red Queen's country? For in that land, you remember, it takes all the running you can do to keep in the same place."—James Wilson). V. Sackville-West was ably and easily pilloried by Cassandra Rollin, W. Leslie Nicholls, Jean Lord, and Reginald Cave.

I recommend that the first prize should be divided between Allan M. Laing and A. K. Milne; and that the second prize should go to Lew.

WAGGERY (by Y. Y.)

I noticed with some misgiving in the news of the week that a dog with two tails has been born in Tasmania. I do not disbelieve it, though I have always known that distance lends enhancement to the true. But the incident seems to indicate an unhealthy desire on nature's part to take our similes seriously; and what could be worse for the language? This two-tailed dog is bound to be as happy as a dog with two tails, and so the old simile loses its relation to the unattainable and becomes a mere truism. We now have two tails and one simile where we had two similes and one tail before. I leave it to the zoologists and the grammarians to decide whether we gain or lose by the transaction.

My own view is worth little, a fact which has never deterred me from expressing it. Otherwise, I should be out of a job, and NEW STATESMAN AND NATION readers would, I hope, regret a little of the lightness of heart and lightness of head which they find in these columns. I think, then, that in spite of the loss to the language, there are a number of similes which, if they forfeited their professional status, so to speak, by mixing with truth and reality, would increase the gaiety of nations. Who would not rejoice to see the House of Peers all "as drunk as lords"? There would even be some minor satisfaction in knowing the judicial humorist had become "as sober as a judge." If dilemmas could cease to be metaphorical and sprout actual horns, many an awkward choice would be made easier. . . .

No doubt, now, I shall be told I wish to encourage the propagation of two-tailed dogs. That is the penalty of waggery.

ALLAN M. LAING

Y. Y. ON FLATTERY

If imitation is really the sincerest form of flattery, I suppose I should be feeling pretty pleased with myself. After all, everybody likes being flattered. I have even known my father's gardener to be thawed into an almost human state by what my nurse called "a wallop o' blarney." There is an illogical devil in most of us which responds to the grossest flattery, even when we know it is all lies. Similarly the German people will believe everything Herr Hitler tells them, including—presumably—that part of *Mein Kampf* where he insists that the masses must be deceived with the "big lie." (I wonder, by the way, how long it would take the Nazi propaganda machine to convince the German public that the moon is populated by Germans anxious to return to the Reich. I would give it three months.)

I myself, on the rare occasions when I am treated to flattery, bask in it like a lizard on a rock. If anybody tells me, for instance, that I "never seem to have a moment to spare," I feel smug and industrious for some hours afterwards; unless, of course, there is a third person present to say, "What, Y. *industrious*? My dear, he sits with his feet up all day, smoking." That breaks the spell. Faced with the two pictures, one of Y., the human dynamo, and the other of Y., the smoke-puffing dreamer, I am bound to admit that the second is the less misleading. But if that third person had not been there, or had kept a decent silence, I should have accepted the first picture gladly, knowing it to be false.

On the other hand, if my neighbour at dinner started off, "Mr. Y., you're a teetotaller, aren't you?" . . .

A. K. MILNE

COUNTRY NOTES

JUNE

I wonder if the Saxons called June the dry-month because of the parched lips awaiting the flowing mead of its successor? This fermented liquor is now little known, and was made of honey, malt, and spices according to taste. I have heard that it was "woundy strong," yet that can hardly be the reason for its disuse.

I went out so early one morning that even the Chillingham bull, though ever alert, was not so ready as usual to nuzzle my palm. But I could see that the crab-apples, due to the heat wave, had already assumed a reddish tinge; and the infrequent dog-rose by the wayside was a pleasant sight. When the sun appeared, throwing a flush upon the white walls of the cowhouse, the inmates could be heard calling for the maid. Do the modern cows that are "stripped" (a local word) by machines miss the persuasive song of Mary?

THE BUSY BEES

The bees are on their daily round, visiting alike garden flower and bloom of bush and tree. We are assured that honey bees are most diligent workers, but which of us would not be so with a similar delightful calling? Also, the bee-master is to be envied his privilege of smoothing the brown, velvety coats of his charges.

While I was engaged in turning over a hotbed a monstrous fly appeared, splendidly arrayed in metallic green, and buzzing angrily. As I was perhaps the offender, I suffered the creature to have its will, which did not lead it far. Strolling along, I beheld evidence of the destructive aphides on all sides; yet for me the sight of a throstle in the copse vied with the bright glance of a water-vole until the latter slid into the moat.

Such is a part of the varied life to be found in a quiet English countryside.

LEW

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 488

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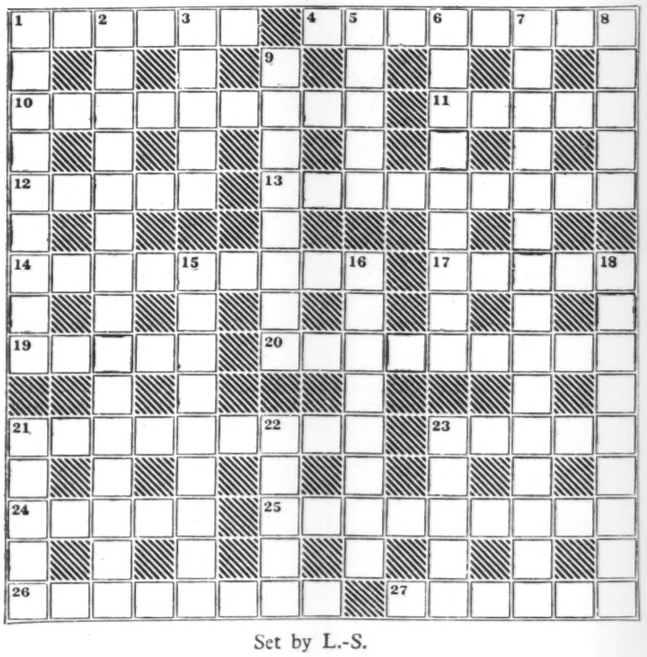

Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is

J. O. Youngman, Gissings Farm, Fressingfield, Diss

ACROSS

1. They are collared on top by the tailor. (6)
4. Result of motor accidents, dead or alive. (8)
10. Hi, Sam, get in step. (9)
11. The light signal is green. (5)
12. They cause boats to change positions. (5)
13. How the bath water should get less and less. (9)
14. Brigham Young's saints. (9)
17. See 7. (5)
19. As presentable as boots. (5)
20. Fatigue squad? (9)
21. A noble car in a Spanish city. (9)
23. This began the I.R.A. campaign. (5)
24. Glide icily. (5)
25. One follows it back no doubt after the initial blaze. (9)
26. Shows how hoardings result in grievings. (8)
27. "Black" day. (6)

DOWN

1. They score for you at cricket, against you at golf. (9)
2. Do they make air holes? (15)
3. They are bound to look sheepish sooner or later. (5)
5. How the cuttle fish colour came up. (5)
6. There should be no grounds for drinking from this after dinner. (9)
7 and 17. Diet for curly locks. (15)
8. An untrue anecdote. (5)
9. Army slang for Queen Victoria. (8)
15. Does he do the opposite of going west at last? (9)
16. People with these would need 3ft. sleeves. (8)
18. The chief office in Town. (9)
21. She would be a bit sticky no doubt. (5)
22. She was most upset when the C.O. went up to her. (5)
23. "Let your own discretion be your ——." (5)

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

F	R	E	S	H	S	T	A	R	T	■	S	M	U	T
A	■	A	■	O	■	A	■	I	■	■	■	E	■	U
D	I	S	T	U	R	B	I	N	G	■	O	N	E	R
E	■	T	■	S	■	A	■	G	■	C	■	A	■	N
■	■	■	P	E	T	R	O	L	G	A	U	G	E	S
S	■	B	■	T	■	E	■	E	■	R	■	E	■	A
T	U	R	N	O	U	T	■	T	A	V	E	R	N	S
R	■	I	■	H	■	■	■	■	I	■	I	■	I	■
A	R	D	U	O	U	S	■	L	I	N	S	E	E	D
W	■	L	■	U	■	U	■	O	■	G	■	S	■	E
B	R	E	A	S	T	S	T	R	O	K	E	■	■	■
E	■	P	■	E	■	P	■	E	■	N	■	Y	■	W
R	O	A	D	■	B	E	L	L	R	I	N	G	E	R
R	■	T	■	■	■	C	■	E	■	F	■	R	■	E
Y	O	H	O	■	S	T	R	I	K	E	D	O	W	N

THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By DIVES

AIRCRAFT SHARES—HOME RAILS—SILVER UNCERTAINTIES

So idle has the Stock Exchange been this week that some jobbers passed the time by singing hymns. This, however, did not indicate any prayerful attitude in the international situation. If Herr Hitler believes that the Stock Exchange slump will cause the money interests to demand appeasement he is making a big mistake. As far as the Stock Exchange is concerned, he is making the City bellicose. The fluctuations in prices this week were small and not significant. The rise in the gilt-edged market which followed Mr. Chamberlain's speech was (very properly) lost on Wednesday. Brazilian Government issues, however, have been rising on the expectation of a resumption of the debt service in the not too distant future. "Aggressor" Bonds, that is Japanese and German, have been weaker. If any investor has faith in Japan he can buy a 6 per cent. bond at 37 or a 5 per cent. at 31¼, but it is an expensive way of papering a room. The industrial markets have been uninteresting. Bristol Aeroplane 10*s.* shares fell from 20*s.* 3*d.* to 19*s.* 9*d.* on a final dividend which made 10.2 per cent. on the increased capital. The real earnings, however, could not have been disclosed. Profits of £687,817 are entirely out of keeping with the tax allocation of £285,000. The leading aircraft shares are, indeed, a study in reticence.

	High 1939	Present price	Current dividend %	Earnings %	Yields Divs. %	Yields Earnings %
Bristol Aeroplane 10/-	23/9	19/6	10.2	12	£ s. d. 5 8 6	£ s. d. 6 7 6
De Havilland £1 ..	50/6	37/-	12½	20.4	6 16 6	11 2 6
Handley Page 5/-..	29/4	22/3	37.6	37.75	8 9 0	8 10 6
Short Bros. 5/- ..	43/4	35/6	42½	119.7	6 1 6	17 1 0

My choice is Short Brothers, which will be forced sooner or later to declare a share bonus to bring their capital into line with their earning power.

* * *

The interim dividends of the home railway companies will be declared on July 27th and 28th, together with the net earnings for the first half of the year. The increase in gross traffics for the last half-year of £483,000 for the four companies was surprisingly good. No one had expected that an accumulated deficit of £1,789,000 at the end of the twelfth week would be wiped out in so short a time. On analysis the traffic gains do not look so impressive. Coal accounted for the bulk of them, merchandise contributed very little, and passenger receipts actually declined. In other words, it was the rearmament programme which pulled the railways out of the "red." *The Economist* has been trying to estimate the half-yearly net earnings. On the assumption that savings will be rather less than in the last half of 1938 and that each company will retain only 40 per cent. of the increase in gross traffics, owing to the direct cost of handling a higher volume of traffic, it arrives at the following results for the marginal stocks :—

Marginal Stocks	Amounts in £000's: Divs. paid in 1938	Required for full divs.†	Traffics gain 1st half 1939	Maximum potential savings	Estimated additional expenditure	Net gain for half year	Potential interim dividends %
L.M.S. 4% pref. 1923	Nil	1,569	110	700	750	60	¼
L.N.E. (4% 1st pref.)	Nil						1
(5% pref.)	Nil	2,129	7	1,000	475	532	1¼
G.W. Ord.	⅛%	429*	309	500	400	409	1
Southern Pref. Ord.	5%	399‡	57	?	?	60	2½

† Over and above 1938 results. ‡ Including £266,600 for new debenture interest, of which £116,600 falls in first half-year. *Cost of 1 per cent. dividend on ordinary.

These estimates are not very optimistic. What is likely to be the position in the second half of the year? The gross traffics are bound to make a favourable comparison with the corresponding half of 1938, which was a period of real depression. *The Economist* cautiously does not attempt to give any detailed estimates. Let us be conservative and assume that the potential dividends for the first half-year are doubled for the full year, except in the case of London Midland and Scottish 1923 Preference Stock, which, being a small issue, will gain relatively more. Here are the potential yields :—

	1939 High	1939 Low	Present	Est. Div. %	Gross Yield %
L.M.S. 1st Pref.	63½	37½	60	4	£6 13 3
Do 1923 Pref. ..	46¼	20	40	2	5 0 0
L.N.E. 4% 2nd Gtd. ..	68⅞	47	65	4	6 3 0
Do. 4% 1st Pref. ..	38	19	32	2	6 5 0
G.W.R. Ordy.	38	21½	33	2	6 1 3
Sthn. Prefd. Ordy. ..	78	48¼	70½	5	7 1 9

On this view London Midland and Scottish 1923 Preference appears rather over-valued as compared with London and North-Eastern 1st Preference, but if I had to advise a speculative investment I would stand for the senior stocks and choose London and North-Eastern 2nd Guaranteed and London Midland and Scottish 1st Preference, with Southern Preferred Ordinary, which will gain considerably from the 5 per cent. increase in London fares, as a close "runner-up."

* * *

At the cost of placating the Senate's Silver block by a 71 cents buying price for domestic silver, the U.S. Government has got its Monetary Powers Bill through Congress. The President retains his two billion dollar Stabilisation Fund, his devaluation powers and the right to purchase foreign silver. So far, so good. But it is still difficult to fathom the U.S. Treasury's silver policy. Up to last Monday, Mr Morganthau followed the world price downwards to the lowest level touched since 1931. On that day, spot silver was quoted in London at 16 $\frac{7}{16}$*d.* per ounce, while the U.S. Treasury's foreign buying price was 35 cents, as compared with 43 cents (London, 19 $\frac{7}{16}$*d.*) on June 26th. Since then, the London price has rallied fractionally on the belief that the U.S. Government may decide to steady the market so as not to jeopardise Mexican oil negotiations. It remains to be seen, however, whether Mr. Morganthau would be ready to follow the world price upwards. His statement that he intends to follow a "day-to-day policy" forms obviously no basis for arbitrage business, since a week at least must elapse between a purchase of silver in London and its re-sale to the Treasury in New York. It would probably be better for silver producers outside the U.S.A. if Mr. Morganthau withdrew altogether from the market, thus letting silver find its own level on a commercial basis. The mines would then know where they stood, and could adjust their output accordingly. Present uncertainties are simply creating confusion and losses. The silver policy of the United States, with all its adverse reactions on China and other silver standard countries, has been an unmitigated nuisance from first to last.

Company Meeting

HOVIS LIMITED

MR. A. H. DENCE'S ADDRESS

THE forty-first Ordinary General Meeting of Hovis, Ltd., was held on July 6th in London.

Mr. A. H. Dence, J.P. (the Chairman), in the course of his speech, said: The reserve account is £500,000 as against £480,000 last year, and in the proposals which we have placed before you the directors recommend an addition to that figure of £20,000.

The profit on trading compared with last year shows an increase of £14,000. The balance carried to balance sheet is £148,964 against the previous year's figure, showing an increase of £13,722, which the directors consider very satisfactory.

During the year under review there was a heavy decline in wheat prices. No. 1 Manitoba showing a fall of 30*s* and other descriptions 15*s.* per quarter. The smaller harvests of the previous year were followed by big crops in the chief exporting countries and also in Europe, with the result that once more supplies became well in excess of demand. Generally speaking, the outlook for the crops now being grown in the exporting countries is favourable and there should be no anxiety as regards supplies in the current year.

There were temporary sharp rises resulting from the September crisis and other periods of international tension, and conditions in the wheat market were further complicated by the Government purchases of wheat from Rumania and by the purchase and replacements of wheat for national food defence purposes. With regard to this security stock, in our opinion, it would surely be more prudent if, instead of being in the form of raw material, the wheat were manufactured into flour and well distributed in smaller quantities in depots and stores all over the country, especially inland. In this way, instead of security stock being concentrated in a few large centres, all millers, large and small, would be participating in the food reserve scheme, and the manufactured article, flour, instead of the raw material, would be available for immediate distribution, with considerably less transport, in the event of national emergency. Milling is not merely an essential industry, but in the event of war it is a vital industry to the country.

It has been the policy of your directors for some years to bring their mills up to the highest degree of efficiency possible and this policy we have consistently followed. Except for maintenance and replacement due to wear and tear, all our mills are now complete and up to date, and we are proud of them. The report was unanimously adopted.

THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION

The Week-end Review

Financial and Insurance Supplement

SATURDAY, JULY 15, 1939

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FINANCES OF A COCK-EYED WORLD

THESE are hard days for interpreters of economic horoscopes, and it is fortunate for financial journalists that the public's memory of words printed in the daily press, or even in the less impermanent columns of this journal, is generally short. In the Financial and Insurance Supplement, published by THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION a year ago, the opinion was expressed that the British rearmament programme was putting a brake on the then year-old industrial recession, but that the machine might well continue to run slowly downhill unless, as seemed probable, fresh motive-power were derived from recovery in the United States. There are degrees of myopia: the writers whose comments in July, 1938, are thus unkindly resurrected have no need to plead guilty to exceptional short-sightedness. A year ago it was difficult to foresee that in the coming twelve months the business world would be the victim of a political crisis under whose sway its development has become so cock-eyed as to upset all calculations based on normal experience.

On the one hand, the hoped for recovery in America did not materialise. Partly as a result of the international crisis (with continued loss of export trade and absence of foreign lending as its concomitants), and partly because uneconomically high labour costs have given capitalists in the United States a bias—weighted by antagonism to the Administration—in favour of deflation, American business has remained stagnant. On the other hand, in this country the wildly accelerated tempo of armaments expenditure covered only in part by tax revenue has applied to industry and employment a stimulus far more powerful than could have been foreseen a year ago. Our last Supplement included a calculation that by 1941 British budget expenditure might rise to £1,150 millions. As it is, outgoings in 1939–40 are already likely to exceed £1,350 millions, including over £400 millions to be met by borrowing. In consequence, whereas the U.S. Government is proposing to counteract by a long-term programme of "pump-priming" an apparently permanent deficiency in the private investment of capital, the British Government is facing (or rather, trying to evade) the problems of a growing, semi-inflationary boom.

It is a curiously lop-sided boom, and lacks many of a boom's normal, inflationary characteristics. Making allowance for armaments production not included in the available indices of business activity, it is clear that current industrial output is proceeding at a rate never before attained in this country. Employment stands at a record level, steel works and engineering shops are operating practically up to maximum capacity, and collieries are enjoying renewed activity—partly as a result of home demand, and partly because of foreign purchases for emergency storage. There is marked improvement in rail traffics, and even in the textile trades; retail turn-over is rising fast, and industries making consumers' goods—particularly in the cheaper categories—are thriving. Yet there is persistent depression in the stock markets; bank clearings, especially town and metropolitan, continue to decline; there is little activity in the market for new capital; commodity prices are slightly lower than a year ago, and there is a marked absence of any inclination to accumulate private stocks. Moreover, the boom is patchy. Relatively good total employment in the building industry obscures the fact that growing paralysis in house-building is neutralised by activity in factory construction and A.R.P. contracts in which the defence programme is the dominant factor. In Central London, retail trade is declining in contrast to the general trend—a reflection of the fact that the City has become a distressed area. Demand for the more durable sorts of consumers' goods, particularly in the higher ranges, is poor.

The implications of this paradox are worth considering briefly. The development of a physical boom without the emergence of a trace of boom psychology is a novel experience in a capitalist economy. Its cause is Hitler, or, in other words, acute lack of confidence in the durability either of demand or of values. If there were to be an outbreak of peace, the present structure of prosperity pyramided on armaments would collapse; and, in the event of totalitarian war, assets in the shape of cash, securities and buildings might prove to be as insubstantial stuff as Prospero's pageant. Complete uncertainty as to the future, combined with the absence (partly for the same reason) of American buying, accounts for manufacturers' unusual reluctance to purchase "forward" commodities and the sluggishness of raw material prices. The inhibiting influence of crisis fears explains the depression in equities, the large "risk" element in determining acceptable dividend yields, the stagnation in the new issue market and the relatively small demand for furniture, radio sets, and even automobiles, as compared with day-to-day food

and clothing. As a result, there is a serious danger that the present distortion of capital investment, resulting from the fact that the armament industries alone are expanding their capacity and are attracting more and more labour from civil engineering, may render Britain appallingly vulnerable to a slump if the process of piling up munitions of war ever comes to an end. Yet without its termination the world must ultimately reach financial collapse.

Against this crazy background, subsequent articles in this Supplement review briefly the influence of the crisis on various aspects of the country's financial structure—beginning with an examination of the dominant factor, Government borrowing, and proceeding to discussions of the problems arising in connection with war risks in relation to property, the situation of building societies and the position of life assurance. Over every branch of finance there hangs to-day the shadow of an unresolved political crisis. It has been weathered so far in this country without serious economic disturbance—for the reason, first, that there was much slack which could be taken up in productive capacity, and secondly, because fear of bombs has, illogically, deterred people from assisting privately the effects of the inflationary "multiplier" of deficit state finance. But the economic problems of the crisis—local shortages of labour, unbalanced industrial activity, growing excess of imports and resulting depreciation of sterling—will become more pressing in the early future. There is unhappily little evidence to suggest that the Government appreciates the complexity of these problems or has devised means whereby to solve them. With the insatiable demands of the Defence Departments as motive-power, the economic machine rolls on—not slowly or downhill, this year, but swiftly and blindly, without direction or effort to plan its course, into the unknown.

THE BORROWING PROGRAMME

The moot point is whether the Government's borrowing programme can be carried through without upsetting our supposedly free economy. For the year ending next March the Treasury will probably borrow over £400 millions for rearmament, apart from export credits created to finance the defences of "guaranteed" allies. This is at least equal to the entire net savings of the country in a normal year, or, allowing for depreciation and maintenance and business losses, to nearly 50 per cent. of the gross savings of the country. Mr. Keynes recently argued that the Government had nothing to worry about except the physical capacity of the country to produce the goods, provided that there was no leakage of resources abroad and no increase in the adverse balance of foreign trade. On these assumptions the income of the community would be equal to what the Government spends, plus what individuals spend, and there would be no financing problem. The savings would come into existence *pari passu* with the expenditure sand the only question for the Treasury would be the ultimate form in which the savings should be held or invested, that is, as balances at the Bank of England, in Treasury Bills and bonds, or in longer-dated Government debt. Such was the Keynesian thesis.

But the problem is not really as simple as Mr. Keynes would have us believe. It might be easy if we had finality, but no one can say how long the armament race will last. Suppose, after borrowing, say, £400 millions in 1939-40, the race goes on and the deficit reaches £500 millions and £600 millions, respectively, in the next two years. That would mean an addition in 1942 of £1,500 millions to the national debt and the payment of an annual tribute thereafter of, say, £55 millions or more to the rentier classes by way of interest. A capital levy at the end of it all would seem inevitable, whatever happens. But while the borrowing goes on at this incredible rate there is always the risk of running into an inflationary spiral of rising prices. As long as the physical capacity of this country is sufficient to provide both for the Government's spending and the spending of the general public at the current level of prices, there is, of course, no question of inflation. But let us assume that we reach a state of full employment by the end of the year—with the unemployment figure held, for technological reasons, at around one million. Increasing Government expenditures on arms and armament supplies would thereafter begin to force up prices, for, without complete Government control of consumption and investment, a rise in prices would be necessary to restrict private spending and make room for Government spending. This rise in prices would not necessarily be confined to luxury goods. It would extend to the whole range of goods which make up the cost of living and it would lead to demands for an increase in wages—in other words, it would be the beginning of the inflationary spiral. If we are borrowing up to the hilt in 1939-40, as most economists believe, we must therefore run the risk of an inflation in 1940-41, if the arms race goes on.

A rise in prices sets up various corrective forces and in normal conditions it brings about a rise in the rate of interest, for an inflationary movement is ordinarily offset by the deflationary force of dearer money. The maintenance of cheap money is no longer a matter of Treasury manipulation. Even without an appreciable rise in the cost of living the Treasury is finding it difficult to keep the long-term rate of interest stable in spite of all its "controls."

Let us examine the theory of its control. The manipulation of the market should be easy now that the Exchange Equalisation Fund is equipped to deal with the flow of foreign funds into and out of the country by purchases or sales of gold. Gone are the days when bank rate had to be raised up or down (and the rate of interest affected) to meet upsets in the foreign exchange market. With the severance of the gold link, sterling can now find its natural level of exchange value with the help of Exchange Fund operations. So far this year our adverse balance of trade has not worsened and the task of the Exchange Fund is lightened by the present embargo on foreign loans (Government credits for our new Allies excepted) and by the unofficial ban on foreign investment, which the City houses are religiously and scrupulously observing. In theory, then, the Treasury should have no difficulty in preventing a rise in the long-term rate of interest; for, as long as the exchange value of sterling is kept stable, the Bank of England can determine the level of the gilt-edged market by open-market operations, that is, by buying or selling Government securities. When the Bank of England buys securities, it increases the supply of bankers' cash and ultimately forces the joint stock banks to add to their holdings of investments in the gilt-edged market.

But the theory this year has not been put into practice. The joint stock banks not only maintain a cash ratio of around 10 per cent. but a ratio of all liquid assets to total liabilities of around 30 per cent. This latter ratio cannot be maintained without an adequate supply of Treasury bills, and this year the banks on the whole have been short of bills in spite of the increasing expenditure on arms. The bill portfolio of the eleven clearing banks was only £200 millions at the end of

May. Indeed they absorbed only £10 millions of the expansion of £75 millions which accrued in the tender bill issue since March, and they were only able to maintain their liquid assets ratio at around 30 per cent. by selling investments! In other words, the banks were forced to contribute to the weakness of the gilt-edged market this year just at a time when an appearance of strength was vital for future Treasury funding operations.

Consider how the market has deteriorated. Last February Essex could issue a successful 3½ per cent. loan at 97—so successfully that the stock rose to 100. But recently Hertfordshire and the L.C.C. had to issue identical loans at 96½—and such was the depressed state of the market that the L.C.C. loan opened at 2 discount. It is time that the Treasury and the Bank of England took the gilt-edged market in hand.

What can the authorities do? In the first place, they can increase the supply of bank cash and allow the banks an adequate supply of Treasury bills, so that the banks can increase their investments in the gilt-edged market. The authorities need not be afraid at this juncture of a floating debt of £1,076 millions. There is nothing alarming in the floating debt rising above £1,000 millions. Much water has flowed under the monetary bridge since the Colwyn Committee suggested in 1931 that the Treasury bill issue ought not to rise much above £600 millions. There is now the Exchange Fund which issues bills backed wholly by gold held outside the banking system or tap bills which represent simply its unused borrowing powers. The effective floating debt, that is, the tender bill issue, stands at not more than £479,000,000 and there is no reason why the joint stock bank holdings of bills should not be increased by £100 millions. Somehow the banks must be forced into the gilt-edged market as buyers.

In the second place, the Government should be applying the brake on home corporation issues. The control exercised by the Bank of England over home corporation issues determines the order of their entry on the market, rather than the quantum of their borrowings. This is not enough for a crisis. The Treasury should control the amount of borrowings and prevent issues now being made which only add to the competition between private and Government demands for the output of goods. If a National Investment Board were established, it would see to it that private and local corporation loans were reduced at a time when the physical capacity of the country is being taxed to meet the Government's enormous expenditure on arms.

In the third place, the Government Departments should now be adding to their holdings of suitable Government stocks in the open market. The extra budgetary funds in the hands of Government Departments (Post Office Savings Bank, Trustees Savings Bank, National Health Insurance Funds, Treasury Pensions Account, Unemployment Insurance Fund, Public Trustee, Ecclesiastical Commissioners, Local Loans Fund, etc.) amounted at the end of 1937 to rather more than £700 millions. This calculation takes no account of any securities held by the Issue Department of the Bank of England or by the Exchange Equalisation Fund, whose assets total over £800 millions. The investment of these large funds plays an important part in the Treasury manipulation of the gilt-edged market. Of course, this is largely determined by the nature of the liabilities assumed. The surplus of the Unemployment Insurance Fund must be invested, for example, in short-term bonds, but the Treasury can do much by switching funds into stocks which are in need of special support in the market—such as stocks with early maturities or with a maturity similar to that designated for the next Government loan.

When will the next funding operation take piace? If there is no war this summer, perhaps the autumn will see the funding of a considerable part of the floating debt. It depends how cleverly the Treasury plays its cards. Let us hope it plays them more successfully than it has done in recent months. Let us hope that it takes Mr. Keynes's practical advice and issues a stock with a short date, a low coupon and a yield to redemption which appeals to the tax-saving rentier classes. But let the rentier classes also take warning. If their response is not adequate, the next Government operation in the market will be in the nature of a forced loan. This is a crisis—not a gilt-edged market holiday.

PROPERTY AND WAR RISKS

ON June 15th an impressive City deputation, led by the Governor of the Bank and representing Chambers of Commerce, property owners, insurance brokers, bankers and other financial interests, interviewed the Chancellor of the Exchequer and urged him to reconsider the Government's decision that, in the case of buildings and their contents, war risks are not an insurable proposition. Sir John Simon apparently went no farther than a promise to consider carefully the deputation's submission, which was that, in the absence of war risk insurance, real estate values were being adversely affected and building enterprise seriously curtailed. He can hardly fail, however, to have been impressed by the May building statistics which were published a few days later and revealed a fall of 38 per cent., as compared with a year ago, in the value of plans approved for new dwelling houses. Though the proportion of skilled workers unemployed in the building industry is still below 9 per cent., this reflects the temporary stimulus—direct and indirect—of Defence construction. In London and other vulnerable areas civil building is paralysed, and even the purchase of house, shop or office property is gravely impeded by the fact that banks, insurance companies and other finance institutions have cut down mortgage business to a minimum. When account is taken of the precarious position of the building societies and their mortgagors—unable, as they are, to cover the risk of destruction of property by aerial bombardment—it is obvious that the lack of war risk insurance facilities is a serious chink in capitalism's near-war armour.

To the suggestion that Mammon, in the sense of capitalist private enterprise, should look after its own children, the insurance companies and Lloyd's underwriters who normally cover risks of fire and other "acts of God" damage have a valid answer. The value of buildings, house and commercial, in this country is of the order of £4,500 millions—to say nothing of their contents—and probably half of this property is situated in areas liable to intensive air attack. With such an immense theoretical total loss at stake, the underwriters argue, it is impossible on the basis of any past experience to arrive actuarially at an estimate either of possible claims or of the probable premium income which would be accumulated, at any hypothetical rate, before claims had to be met. Premiums might be calculated on the assumption that a European war on a major scale occurs once in a generation; but in present circumstances is there any assurance that war involving Britain will not occur before two annual premiums have been paid? In that event insurers who underwrote war risks to-day would be liable to enormous (and incalculable) loss, which could be met, if at all, only at the cost of depleting inequitably the reserves accumulated for the protective benefit of those insured under normal "civil risks" contracts. In short, the argument proceeds, insurance against war risks—save on the basis of a mutual fund, such as now is run by a property owners' society, but whose resources might be wholly incommensurate with total claims—is not insurance but a gamble on the insurers' part. In such a gamble the insurers, for reasons perfectly creditable, have consistently refused to take a hand.

Does it follow, however, that a similar attitude should be

adopted by the State? So far, the Government has undertaken to provide insurance benefits (on the same scale as may be approved for combatants) for the dependants of civilians killed or maimed in war, and to cover stocks of essential commodities against war risks. In the case of property, however, such as houses, shops, factories and their contents, the Chancellor told Parliament last January that the Government could not commit the country to "so vague and indeterminate a liability." Damage would be assessed as nearly after the event as possible, and after the war, "when the extent of the damage to private property is known, such contribution will be made from public funds as the circumstances make possible, in accordance with a scale which would at any rate pay in full up to a certain limit of loss." This declaration of policy is open to objection from two standpoints. First, why should owners of real estate be compensated gratis by the community, many of whose members will have suffered intangible loss through disturbance of their normal earning capacity, even if they suffer no physical injury? Secondly, from the point of view of those owning or lending money secured on building property, the conditional promise of a Government to "contribute" according to its means at the end of a war, and in a currency which might be hopelessly depreciated, is an assurance much too vague as a basis for current business transactions, especially since the Government has announced that it accepts the recommendation of the Committee appointed by the Lord Chancellor last winter to consider the responsibility for the repair of premises damaged by hostilities. That Committee, it will be recalled, recommended that with certain exceptions (e.g. mining and agricultural leases) all covenants for the repair of leasehold property should be void in respect of war damage, and that the lessees of premises rendered unfit for use on that account should be relieved of the obligation to pay rent. Thus the onus of war risks is planted firmly on the shoulders of the owner or mortgagee of property, subject only to the indefinite promise that the State will ultimately "do what it can to help in reconstruction." It is a situation pregnant with possibilities of ruin for small investors in property and building societies alike. If real estate values are not to slump in vulnerable areas, and if civil building activity is to be restored, action by the Government is clearly desirable.

Against a State insurance scheme applicable to property in wartime it is argued, first, that an indeterminate liability which the insurance companies cannot undertake might prove to be too great for the Treasury and that default would be more discreditable than refusal now to give any definite undertaking. Secondly, it is objected that even if damage were assessed at the time of its occurrence and compensation paid promptly on that basis, the owner of property might be unable to reconstruct his building during the war, while replacement costs after hostilities had ceased might have soared, through currency inflation, to an astronomic level. The second argument does not carry great weight. A rise in prices as a result of war is a risk which faces every citizen, and against which insurance is obviously impossible. If a property owner had the assurance that he would receive in cash the money value of his premises at the time of their destruction, equity would be satisfied and a firm basis would be re-established for current enterprise in building and lending on the security of real estate. The subsequent use made of compensation cash would be the recipient's own affair. What of the contention that the State might be bankrupted by a property insurance scheme? Theoretically, the possibility exists. Let it be assumed that £3,000 millions of property lies in districts liable to intensive air bombardment. If there were a total loss, claims of such dimensions could not conceivably be met by a State whose Treasury had to finance the prosecution of a war and whose tax revenue would in any case be suffering some diminution as the result of the disturbance to business entailed by "totalitarian" hostilities. But in such an event it is obvious that the catastrophe would have reached a point at which no contracts could survive and the whole social and financial organism of the country would crash in universal anarchy. Against that theoretical possibility no scheme of protection can be devised or expected. What the Government is asked to do is to frame a scheme capable of operation on the more reasonable supposition that a war will involve something less than the virtual annihilation of civilisation.

Let it be imagined that air attacks resulted in the total destruction of 20 per cent. of all buildings in "vulnerable" areas. The consequential claims on a War Risk Fund would be of the order of £600 millions. To accumulate a fund of such dimensions—either by a special addition to Schedule A income tax assessments or by a Stamp Duty on normal fire policies—would clearly take time; but an annual levy of 1 per cent. on all building property would bring in over £40 millions a year, and a fund thus established would grow by accretions of compound interest. There would doubtless be protests against a peace-time levy uniformly on this scale; the owners of property in comparatively "safe" areas would probably complain that they were being penalised for the benefit of their confrères in London and other obvious "targets."

The answer surely is that relative immunity from danger should carry its obligations as well as its advantages, so far as ownership of property is concerned. A compulsory annual levy on all property would be much more equitable than leaving the cost of necessary reconstruction—and people must have houses to live in—to be borne after the war by the community for the benefit of a particular class of capitalists who had contributed nothing towards their compensation. Admittedly, if war came within a brief period, there might be a large temporary deficit in a State War Risks Fund; but it could be made clear now that the annual levy on property would be continued until the fund had been restored to solvency and the risk of another war had been, humanly speaking, eliminated. The essential point at present is that—subject only to the probably remote contingency of 100 per cent. catastrophe—

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there should be absolute certainty that owners of property destroyed will receive promptly definite compensation in cash up to the limit of assessed damage. Otherwise stagnation in building and mortgage business will become progressively more acute.

THE CRISIS AND LIFE ASSURANCE

IN the historic stability and steady growth of British life assurance two factors of prime importance have operated. On the one hand, skilful investment policy has had its fruits in the augmentation of assets on a scale sufficient to overcome the handicap of unforeseen post-1914 taxation. On the other hand, longevity in the assured population—making due allowance for some abnormality in the war years—has been sufficiently satisfactory to justify actuarial assumptions, even when keen competition for new business exercised an influence towards optimism. In both these directions the possibility of war on "totalitarian" lines has raised problems of painful interest both for assurers and assured. If a general European war occurs, one thing only is certain: it will be fought on lines in which the traditional distinction between combatants and non-combatants will have disappeared. But not merely will the hazard of death in the case of the assured civilian population be immeasurably greater than in 1914–18; the course of values—securities, mortgaged property and even currency itself—is unpredictable, and so is the future of premium income.

The problems presented are obviously not susceptible, in abstract terms, of "absolute" solution. As in the case of property war risks—discussed in the previous article in this Supplement—enemy activities in the air might conceivably be so destructive that the entire structure of life assurance would crash in consequence of astronomic claims combined with catastrophic depreciation of assets. *Omne ignotum pro terribili*: the bed on which the managements of assurance companies lie these days is not politically Vi-sprung. All that can be done pragmatically is to act on the hypothesis that, though depreciation and destruction of assets may be severe, it will not be cataclysmic, and to "hedge," as far as possible, against the more obvious investment risks.

To minimise those risks has been the policy of life offices during the past two years; and even earlier, before war dangers became imminent, the trend of this particular branch of institutional investment (influenced by desire to offset higher taxation by increased income) was so orientated that, as far as is humanly possible, war was "covered." From 1935 onwards the proportion of assurance funds invested in equities has appreciably increased, and of the diminished percentage of the annual increment placed in Government securities the bulk has gone into short-term bonds and Treasury bills. Against the risk of inflation the assurance movement has thus secured for itself reasonable protection; and, unless the British Government, taking a leaf from the totalitarian book, regiments institutional investment and compels assurance companies to support Defence loan issues, it is probable that the recent more "active" investment policy will continue to be pursued for "war-hedge" purposes.

Protection of assets, however, is not synonymous with preservation of premium income. In this aspect of "near-war" problems a development disconcerting for both ordinary and industrial life offices has been the Order in Council, last month, establishing a moratorium on premiums for Militiamen in training and Territorials or Reservists called up for service. The inference is that in the event of war a similar moratorium would be proclaimed in relation to the whole of the large numbers of persons engaged not merely in active Defence but in "passive," A.R.P., services. From that to a general moratorium on premiums would be a comparatively short

GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS

ASSURANCE COMPANIES' RETURNS, 1938—the Assurance Companies' Returns deposited with the Board of Trade during the year 1938, in respect of the year 1937, containing information relating to the Life and Bond Investment business of Companies transacting those classes of business and providing a comparative study of the varied experience of Companies during the period covered. Valuation Returns, Revenue and Balance Sheets are given separately, the two latter being shown also in summary form. Additional summaries covering Life Assurances in Force, Bond Investment Policies in Force and New Life Assurance business effected during the period are shown together with comparative statements of Life Assurance and Bond Investment business during the past 10 years.
Summaries of Revenue Accounts, Profit and Loss Accounts (including those of Life and Bond Investment Companies), Balance Sheets of Companies transacting the other classes of business to which the Assurance Companies Act, 1909, as amended, applies, and Personal Accident and Employers' Liability insurance claims paid and outstanding, together with miscellaneous information, are also contained in the volume. Taken as a whole the work constitutes an authoritative and indispensable record of assurance business. £1 7s. 6d. (£1 8s. 1d.).

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step; but, from the offices' standpoint, not merely would there be a grave loss of current income in a period of probably enhanced expenses of administration, but the obvious risk would arise lest many recently under-written policies would have to be carried in arrears through the costly period of hostilities and would thereafter be lapsed or surrendered, with practically no surrender value accumulated out of which the assurer could pay for claims.

In these circumstances it is questionable whether life offices may not feel compelled to modify, in the case of new business, the attitude they have so far maintained with regard to war risks. Hitherto, with the exception that special rates of premium have been required for policies taken out by members of Flying Clubs and of the Civil Air Guard, there has been no increase in the selling price of assurance and policies have continued to be issued without any restrictive clause barring war risks. That is, the offices are in effect selling new assurance at a considerable discount; and a greatly enhanced risk of claims is being borne gratuitously by assurers.

The considerations which have led to this decision are two-fold. First, the vast preponderance of offices' contingent liabilities consists of policies underwritten in the past, whose conditions cannot now be varied. The advent of war in which fatal casualties would not be confined in the main to the young and (broadly speaking) unassured active combatants, but would occur—perhaps more heavily—among civilians of all ages, is bound to mean for assurers an enforced participation in a gigantic gamble for which no preparations in respect of written risks can now be made, so far as premium rates are concerned. In these circumstances the addition of two or three years' normal new business to total liabilities does not radically alter the dimensions of the problem.

Secondly, and somewhat surprisingly, the public has shown little inclination so far to avail itself of the cover offered without extra charge against a risk whose existence was scarcely thought of a few years ago, but whose significance can by no means be ignored to-day. Indications are that, since the European crisis came to a head in the Sudetenland, the volume of new life assurance business has, if anything, tended to decline rather than expand. The influences at work in the public mind are probably much the same as those operative in the security markets. It is not that there is any general disposition to fear that war would spell universal insolvency for the life offices. Of a tendency to "go liquid," by deliberately borrowing on policies and either banking or reinvesting the cash, there is little sign, just as in the stock markets the great majority of individual investors are stoically refraining from liquidation of securities. Assured persons probably reflect that their companies are better placed than themselves to protect financial assets against war damage, and that in the last resort the State would be more likely to come to the rescue of life offices than to compensate individuals whose savings were destroyed either by a bomb or by currency depreciation. On the other hand, just as there is no buying movement in the Stock Exchange, so there is little disposition at present to increase investment in assurance. Whether war comes or not, Government expenditure is clearly on a scale likely to mean not merely some diminution of saving capacity after the tax-collector's demands are met, but also an inflationary fall in the purchasing power of sterling. When long-term assurance contracts are being considered, that factor is naturally inhibitive. Otherwise life offices would long since have been compelled, by the volume of new business which might logically have been expected, either to include restrictive clauses in fresh policies or to raise premium rates—especially for "without profits" policies.

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LIFE ASSURANCE BUSINESS IN 1938

For reasons outlined in the preceding article, the results of 1938 showed a decline in new life assurance business, while the rate of increase in the aggregate funds was less than for the previous year. The differences, however, were comparatively small. The figures of net new business have been as follows:

*Net New Business Written in 1938 by Fifty Ordinary Life Offices

Year	No. of Policies	Sums Assured	Annual Premiums (000's omitted)	Single Premiums	Annuity Consideration
1934	551	£199,800	£7,300	£4,800	£14,500
1935	575	214,600	7,900	4,700	14,700
1936	594	233,600	8,400	4,700	13,700
1937	588	246,700	8,500	4,000	11,600
1938	566	239,100	8,300	3,500	10,600

*New Sums Assured in 1938 of Eight Industrial Life Offices

Year	Sums Assured (000's omitted)
1934	£151,100
1935	146,900
1936	152,300
1937	159,400
1938	162,300

* Savory's Insurance Share Annual.

It will be seen that the new business of the Ordinary life offices was reduced by approximately 3 per cent., while the new sums assured of the Industrial offices, representing business secured mainly from the industrial classes, showed an increase. This latter result is surprising in a year in which general employment conditions were less favourable than in the previous year. It indicates that there is still scope for directing the weekly and monthly savings of the working classes into life assurances.

The total funds of the same life offices as are included in the above table are as follows :

*Year	Ordinary Life Offices Funds	Industrial Life Offices Funds	Total	Increase in Year
		(000's omitted)		
1933	£781,000	£252,500	£1,033,500	—
1934	813,900	270,300	1,084,200	£50,700
1935	844,100	288,000	1,132,100	47,900
1936	886,000	309,300	1,195,300	63,200
1937	925,100	329,000	1,254,100	58,800
1938	961,100	350,200	1,311,300	57,200

* Savory's Insurance Share Annual.

It will be noticed that the increase in the funds in 1938 of £57,200,000 was £1,600,000 less than in the previous year. This reduction is almost entirely accounted for by the fall in interest receipts. It is noteworthy that according to Savory's figures the net interest rate earned by the Ordinary offices has for the first time fallen below 4 per cent.

The 1938 new business figures include a number of very large insurances and, at any rate in the early part of the year, a growing volume of pension schemes. Were it not for these, the new business of the Ordinary offices would no doubt have shown a greater decline. Apart from the "crisis" factor, elsewhere discussed, consideration should also be given to the more normal influences at work. For many years past life assurance contracts have been sold as investment policies. That is to say, the assured has been educated to expect a rate of interest on his Endowment policy considerably higher than the current investment rate on gilt-edged securities and to escape income tax into the bargain. A conjurer can produce rabbits from a hat, but he can only do the apparently impossible by previous preparation and his act lasts only a few minutes. Life offices cannot produce rabbits indefinitely and their secret hiding places will soon have disgorged all their treasures. It is not unreasonable that a man who is proposing to effect an Endowment assurance should want to know the yield should he survive to maturity of the policy, and calculations based on the assumption of a high rate of bonus do produce high yields. Thus in the selling of life assurance in this country the life assurance element has become of secondary importance to the investment aspect. Whether the indicated yields or the assumptions on which they have been calculated will actually be realised is, of course, quite a different matter. The managements of life offices themselves have long ago realised that in face of the severe fall in interest rates they cannot hold out any hope to policy-holders that recent high bonuses will be maintained. The public generally have been slow to appreciate this trend, but every year produces cuts in bonus rates by one or more offices. The offices and their selling organisations have now to adopt a new technique in selling life assurance and one which is perhaps long overdue.

Life assurance should not be given away to anyone who is prepared to gamble in bonus rates. In such circumstances life assurance not paid for is not valued. The middle classes of this country, particularly, are still by almost any standards under-insured, and it is the idea of life assurance proper which has to be popularised. In addition, the idea must be brought home that the need is not for a capital sum payable on death or at a fixed age, but for an income which would not vary according to the level of Stock Exchange prices at the time when the capital sum becomes due to be invested by the policy-holder. The risk of changes in interest rates should be borne not by the assured but by the company, which can make proper provision for such changes.

Considerable progress has been made in recent years in establishing pension schemes for industrial companies. The principle is, of course, that money deducted from salaries and wages is never missed by the employee, while the advantages from the point of view of the employers in establishing such schemes and in subsidising them by direct contribution are

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obvious. In present conditions it is doubtful whether life offices can afford not to undertake this pension scheme business, for one of its many advantages is that the idea of life assurance and pension insurance is sold not individually to a number of people, but to the more thoughtful employers and employees' representatives.

Particularly during the latter part of 1938 and, of course, in 1939, the managements of life offices have been concerned to a considerable degree in making provision for war-time conditions, particularly in preparing duplicate records and providing alternative accommodation for the staffs out of London and vulnerable cities in the event of war. On the investment side life offices generally, if they were not convinced before, at any rate became convinced in 1938 that the trend of interest rates was probably upwards. There is no indication of any very great increase in "liquidity preference," although there was a tendency towards short-dated securities. An increase in the general market rate of interest is, of course, inconvenient since it brings in its train depreciation of existing holdings, and this aspect is referred to by nearly every insurance chairman. At the end of 1938 the margin between market values and book values of life offices' investments was generally small and, as might be expected, those offices which have expanded most rapidly in recent years and were compelled to invest money when market prices were comparatively high have, on the face of it, suffered worst. The point, however, must be made that the expanding office has more to gain by a rise in the future rate of interest than the office which is not expanding, since the rate of interest which can be secured on future premium receipts is to such an office at least as important as the rate at which present funds are invested.

A rise in the pure rate of interest, even though it may cause depreciation of existing holdings, is advantageous to life offices and particularly to expanding offices. It is, however, going too far to say that depreciation does not matter at all, since the type of depreciation which has been suffered by investors during the last few years is due mainly to an increase in the risk factor. This feature is reflected in the accounts of the life offices by the fact that, whereas security prices declined, the net interest yield also declined, although, of course, the experience is not uniform. Perusal of the accounts and chairmen's speeches for 1938 suggests that insurance companies seem perhaps a little complacent concerning their investment results and particularly concerning the depreciation suffered in recent years. Nor perhaps is it a good point to make that some companies have had to invest their large sums in years in which market prices on the Stock Exchange were high. In ordinary investment the timing of purchases is at least as important as the choice of securities, and vigorous expansion in time of high prices may be regarded as in some ways a mistake. The business of life assurance in particular is such that it is impossible to expand or contract at short notice, and provided that business losses, that is to say, depreciation due to causes other than a long-term value of money, do not increase, the position of insurance companies in respect of the market value of their assets is at the present time perfectly sound, although the aggregate investment reserve funds and concealed surpluses may seem very small. On the whole, the life offices have managed their funds with reasonable success in recent years, the main criticism being directed towards the distribution policy. The surplus of net interest earned over actuarial requirements is, of course, the main source of bonuses, but the whole of this apparent surplus is by no means profit. Every office holds high-yielding securities and a proportion of the interest received in good times should be reserved against capital losses in the future. It is depressing to reflect that the balance sheet position of the companies generally is less strong now than it was ten years ago, despite the appreciation caused by a fall in the long-term rate of interest. Part of the bonuses paid in the last fifteen years may, therefore, be regarded as a capital bonus which cannot be repeated.

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SUPERANNUATION FOR THE SMALL STAFF

The number of Group Life and Pension Schemes arranged during the last few years has grown progressively. Almost daily, the chairmen of companies transacting widely diverse businesses report to their shareholders, with obvious satisfaction, that Group Schemes for the benefit of workpeople and staffs have been inaugurated. The manner in which this announcement is made, in spite of the fact that the firm is contributing towards the cost, indicates that those whose prosperity depends, in a large measure, upon the loyalty and efficiency of employees are fully alive to the benefits accruing from a Staff Pension Scheme. Moreover, the fact that numerous employers, when advertising for staff, make mention of the fact that a Group Life and Pension Scheme is available to new entrants suggests that it is an attraction for prudent employees to take service in a firm where provision is made for their old age. The purpose of this article is, first to draw the attention of employers to the fact that a Group Life and Pension Scheme relieves them of a heavy responsibility in an economic manner; secondly, to correct the erroneous impression that a Superannuation Scheme is only practicable where a large staff is concerned; and thirdly, to give some description of a suitable Scheme.

It is not uncommon to hear an employer say that because his staff is comparatively small a Superannuation Scheme would not be worth while. He forgets that the employer of a small staff faces the same pension problem as his neighbour, whose weekly payroll runs into thousands, and that the cost of a

Pension Scheme, expressed as a percentage of pay roll, is approximately the same in both cases. Moreover, the employer of a small staff should remember that he is more closely in touch with each of his employees than his friend who directs a large works, and that when persons in his employ arrive at an age when retirement from business is essential, personal contact through the years will have created a moral obligation to pay a pension, whose non-fulfilment would be painful to both parties. Yet pensions can be a heavy charge on a small concern. The more obvious, therefore, is the wisdom of instituting a contributory Superannuation Scheme.

The principles of the large Group Scheme can be applied to the small firm. Technically, there are difficulties, because average in age and wages found in the large groups does not operate so effectively with a small scheme, but by the ingenuity of the actuary it is possible for the employer of a small staff to provide the undoubted advantages of a Pension Scheme for his employees. The fundamental principle is to provide, with the assistance of the employer, pensions and life assurance which bear a direct relation to the years of service of the employee and his wage or salary throughout his years of service. This is arranged by a definite amount of pension being purchased for each employee each year according to a schedule which is based on the remuneration of the employee. The amount payable on the death of the employee while in service is also dependent on his salary. The following schedule is a typical example :—

Salary Class	Weekly Wage	Annual Pension payable from age 65 for each complete year as a contributor in Salary Class	Employee's weekly contribution payable while in Salary Class	Life Assurance payable on death while in Salary Class
A	Not exceeding £1 10 0	£0 13 0	0s. 7½d.	£50
B	Over £1 10 0 to 3 0 0	1 6 0	1s. 3d.	100
C	„ 3 0 0 „ 4 0 0	1 19 0	1s. 10½d.	125
D	„ 4 0 0 „ 4 10 0	2 12 0	2s. 6d.	150
E	„ 4 10 0 „ 5 0 0	3 5 0	3s 1½d.	200
F	„ 5 0 0 „ 5 10 0	3 18 0	3s. 9d.	225
G	„ 5 10 0 „ 6 0 0	4 11 0	4s. 4½d.	250
H	„ 6 0 0	5 4 0	5s. 0d.	250

Suppose an employee aged 18 at his nearest birthday joins the scheme in Salary Class A. Assuming that his salary is increased from time to time, eventually reaching £4 5s. per week, so that he contributes to the scheme for 47 years in all in the Salary Classes set out below, he would retire with a pension of £98 3s. per annum, made up as follows :—

For, say,

5 years' service in Salary Class	A at	£0 13 0	per annum		£3 5 0
5 „ „ „ „	B „	1 6 0	„	„	6 10 0
12 „ „ „ „	C „	1 19 0	„	„	23 8 0
25 „ „ „ „	D „	2 12 0	„	„	65 0 0
47 Total annual pension from age 65		..	..	..	£98 3 0
or a weekly pension of ..		..	..	..	£1 17 9

The individual circumstances of each firm will have to be taken into consideration before the actual schedule can be prepared for that firm, but the above will form an indication of how a scheme works. Provisions are made in this scheme that in no circumstances whatsoever can an employee lose any of his own contributions ; and it may be estimated that the cost to the employer of a schedule similar to the above would be approximately between four and five per cent. of his pay roll. If the employer decides to add some pension benefit for service completed prior to the inception of the scheme, special arrangements can be made for funding over a period of years the cost of the pension thus provided by the employer. In considering the cost of a scheme it must be remembered

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The 1938 Report of the Canada Life Assurance Company

SOME OUTSTANDING FIGURES

The figures of this old-established company show remarkable vigour: the total of new business completed amounted to no less than £11,382,000, while Assets increased by £1,346,816.

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Following are some of the more outstanding figures from the report:

New business (after deduction of re-assurances) £11,382,000

Assets £54,635,803

Special Reserve and undivided surplus £2,378,243

Total Business in force (gross) £167,152,465

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that the cost of a modern pension scheme to the employer is allowed as an expense for income tax purposes and therefore the amount which comes out of the profits of the employer is considerably reduced.

There is no doubt that the Group Life and Pension Schemes instituted and serviced by the leading Insurance Companies are becoming an integral part of staff welfare plans. In the past, employees served their time and pensions were allocated at the discretion of the Directors; but the amount and continuance of a pension depended upon the prosperity of the firm concerned. By reason of the introduction of the scientific Group Life and Pension Scheme, the time is coming when men and women will retire automatically at a reasonable age, with the satisfaction of knowing that their pensions are assured, irrespective of the future financial position of the firms with which they were connected. Their pensions will have been purchased from the Insurance Companies and their firms are relieved of any further financial responsibility in respect of them. The Insurance Company pays the pensions direct to the employees and the employer benefits not only by his exact knowledge of what pensions to his employees will cost him, but also by the improved morale of employees for whom the bogy of destitute old age has been removed. The large firms have led the way and popularised the principle of Group Life and Pension Schemes. Small employers of labour or of clerical staffs should not lag behind in providing the same facilities to their own employees.

BUILDING SOCIETIES

The advances made by building societies reached their peak in 1936, at the top of the housing boom. In that year the total of advances was over £140 millions. It fell to rather under £137 millions in 1937, and was again about £137 millions in 1938, despite the further fall in the amount of residential building, for which the index fell from 222 in 1935 and 220 in 1936 to 194 in 1937 and 171 in 1938 (1929 = 100). There has undoubtedly been some tendency for societies, in view of the decline in house-building, to make advances more freely for other types of building, though some societies do not engage at all in business of this sort.

The enormously rapid growth of the building societies during the post-war period is too well known to call for comment. In 1913 the societies advanced only £9 millions and even in 1924 only £40 millions. Advances then doubled between 1924 and 1932, and in recent years the annual figures have been between two and three times the level of 1924. The total of advances made since the war is now over £1,500 millions; and at the end of 1938 the total resources stood at £759 millions—an increase of £49 millions during the year.

These huge advances, of course, involve very large repayments. During 1938 repayments of past loans provided 63 per cent. of the money applied to making new advances. The corresponding percentage for 1937 was 63.7, as against 59 in 1936 and only 48 in 1929. This means that, if house-building falls off further, the societies will need much less new money for financing their normal business, and will either be less ready to accept money from the public, or be driven to expand their investments or engage in new types of building finance. On the other hand, the decline in new business and the piling up of money repaid on old advances will probably give a further stimulus to the process of amalgamation, societies with surplus funds joining up with others which have relied to some extent on bank advances for financing the expansion of their business. Reliance on bank loans, which is frowned upon by the Building Societies Association and by most of the larger societies, will presumably tend to decline as house-building falls off. It has never been a large item in the finance of the movement; but it showed signs of rapid increase during the recent boom, especially in a few swiftly developing areas.

At the end of 1937, the latest year for which the full figures are yet to hand, building societies numbered 977, as against 1,551 in 1913 and 1,112 in 1924. Amalgamation has thus made fairly rapid progress, chiefly by the swallowing up of small societies. Members numbered 2,083,000 and depositors 617,000; and share capital stood at £517 millions and deposits and other debits at nearly £155 millions. Balances due on mortgage were £636 millions, and other assets £74 millions. Thus, total assets stood at £710 millions, as against £65 millions in 1913, £145 millions in 1924, and £313 millions in 1929.

The movement continues to be dominated by a small number of very large societies. Halifax, with assets of over £122 millions at the end of 1937, is more than twice as large as any other society. Abbey Road comes next, with well over £50 millions, followed by four societies (Woolwich, Leeds Permanent, National, and Co-operative Permanent), each with more than £25 millions. Five other societies had assets of over £10 millions at the end of 1937, and eight more assets of over £5 millions. These nineteen societies together had over £300 millions of share capital, nearly £100 millions of deposits, and about £22 millions of reserves. Thirteen of them belonged to the Building Societies Association, including all those mentioned above by name, except Leeds.

Last year the building societies were still congratulating themselves on their success in securing large modifications in the amount demanded of them by way of National Defence Contribution. During 1938 and 1939 their chief concern in relation to the Government has been over the questions of war risk insurance and the issues raised by the Bill now before Parliament in connection with "warranty" and the acceptance of collateral security. These questions are both still unsettled; for though the Government has accepted the principle of national responsibility for war damage, the form of compensation is still vague. Failing a scheme of compulsory

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insurance there is only the promise of some payment at an uncertain date. The Chairman of the Building Societies Association, in his address to last month's Conference, expressed himself in favour of a compulsory insurance plan as likely "to restore confidence to the building industry, relieving owner-occupiers and investors of an ever-present anxiety, and, incidentally, adding to the value of the property."

The Bill now before a committee of the House of Commons raises, of course, issues of outstanding importance for the future of building society finance. The Bill originally introduced by the Labour Party proposed, in addition to validating the taking of collateral security in connection with house-purchase advances, to impose on any society making an advance backed by collateral security an implied warranty that the house in question is of good workmanship and material, and reasonably fit for human habitation. To this the societies took strong objection; and the Government Bill, in validating the taking of collateral, imposes no such obligation, but only requires the society making the advance to inform the member-borrower in writing of the amount of the purchase price covered by collateral security. The Government Bill further lays down that a society making an advance shall be deemed to warrant that the purchase price is reasonable unless before the contract is made it gives notice that no such warranty is implied in the advance. In view of the possibility of "contracting-out," this clause will almost certainly be inoperative; for the building societies have already made clear that they intend to make full use of the power to "contract-out" of the implied obligation.

While the Bill has been under discussion, its critics have attempted to insert a provision that the borrower shall be not only informed wherever collateral security is being taken, but also provided with a full copy of the report made to the society upon the value and condition of the house which he is proposing to acquire. An amendment providing for this was defeated in Committee; but the Committee on June 20th carried against the Government an amendment requiring the society to supply to the borrower a certificate warranting the workmanship, materials, and good tenantable repair (but not the value) of the dwelling which he proposed to acquire. It remains to be seen what will happen to this amendment during the later stages of the Bill's progress.

Another legal question which is of concern to the movement is that of the requirements for amalgamation. The present procedure, which requires the written assent of shareholders holding two-thirds of the shares in each society is admittedly cumbrous and expensive; and there seems to be a good case for making amalgamation easier, especially in view of the prospective difficulties of some of the smaller societies in face of a decline in the amount of building.

There is no doubt that the movement as a whole is confronted with serious problems for the future. It is out of the question that the type of house-building which lends itself most easily to building society financing—that is, the building of dwellings for sale to persons largely above the ordinary run of manual workers—can continue on anything like the scale of recent years. The principal need now in most areas is for houses available for letting at relatively low rents; and there are strong social reasons against inducing ordinary members of the working class to become house-purchasers in view of the need for mobility of labour and the possibility of a sharp fall in house values in areas adversely affected by migration or the decline of local industry and population. Houses for letting are, in general, more suitable for municipal than for private enterprise; but in face of the prospective further decline in total house-building activity, the building societies are increasingly hostile to municipal building, except in the highly unremunerative fields of slum-clearance and overcrowding schemes. The building societies have long been the allies of the private building operator as against municipal enterprise; and they fully realise that they can now carry on the struggle against public building only by an increasing adaptation of their methods to the financing of houses built to let.

INTERESTING

to the discriminating investor is the news that restrictions on investment in the Abbey Road Building Society can now be relaxed. The Society's policy of financing only the best type of mortgage business has been so successful that the following wider opportunities are now available:—

- Sums up to £1,000 can be invested in share accounts where the yield is 3½% net and free of liability to Income Tax.
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To the extent to which opportunities for financing house and other building mortgages fall off, the building societies may become growingly important as general investment agencies. At the end of 1937 their investments, apart from mortgages, totalled £55 millions (an advance of £3 millions on the year). These investments, being largely liquid, constitute an important line of defence; but it is noticeable that over £47 millions out of the total were held by the 45 largest societies, and that a good many societies had hardly any assets except their outstanding mortgages. The proportion of liquid resources has fallen from 18.6 per cent. in 1932 to 10.1 per cent. at the end of 1938. Many of the sounder societies have still ample liquid resources; but the boom brought with it a strong temptation to over-trading in rapidly growing areas, and this has not been fully corrected by the decline in advances owing to the uneven operation of this decline in different areas.

UNIT TRUSTS WEATHER THE STORM

Still less than a decade "old in bottle," the Unit Trust movement has emerged with notable success from a period in which the heaviness of the financial weather might well have strained the stability of a longer-established form of institutional investment. Unit Trust managements had had experience of declining security markets when the movement's progress was reviewed by the New Statesman and Nation a year ago. Between the end of 1936 and midsummer 1938 the fall in the market value of variable-interest securities had been of the order of 30 per cent.; yet the depreciation in the worth of portfolios had led to significantly few sales of sub-units by the public. Would experience be as favourable in the face not of the relatively mild 1937–38 industrial recession, but of a succession of major international crises? The answer seemed, in anticipation, to be doubtful; yet the event has proved it to be definitely in the affirmative. Unit Trusts, under the strain of "near-war" conditions, have displayed remarkable virility; they have repelled successfully not merely the menace of panic sales but the threat—at one moment disquieting—of hastily considered and damaging interference by an ostensibly friendly Government.

If investors in Unit Trusts ever imagined that they were beneficiaries in a magical investment device guaranteed to shield participants against capital losses, they were guilty of obvious financial *naiveté*. All that the managements of Unit Trusts can legitimately claim, or have claimed, is that risks are spread and income well protected. To expect Unit Trust values to move in strong opposition to a general market trend is to expect the impossible; and the depreciation of something like 10 per cent. in the average market value of sub-units which has occurred during the past twelve months conforms pretty closely to the average movement of securities as measured by the Actuaries' and other indices. The avoidance, however, of more than "average" loss is not given to every small or middling-size investor who is induced by need of income to go outside the P.O. Savings Bank's sphere. To recognition of this negative advantage scored by sub-unit holders may be attributed, in part at least, the remarkably stoic attitude of participants in "closed" trusts, as well as the fact that the movement has succeeded in recording, during a distinctly unpropitious year, appreciable quantitative expansion.

Those in search of statistical information relating to Unit Trusts are furnished annually by the *Economist* with invaluable and exclusive data. That journal's latest review (May 13th, 1939) reveals the surprising fact that in the year ended last March cash repurchases of sub-units by managements from the public actually fell from £2,620,000 to £1,600,000. Hitler-proof, the holders of sub-units were as loth to jettison

their investments as the general mass of British investors in normal Stock Exchange securities. Cash sales of sub-units, as was to be expected, also fell; the 1938–39 figure, at just under £8 millions, compares with nearly £13 millions in 1937–38. Even so, the net increment of funds was well over £6 millions—an impressive figure in current political circumstances. Fears entertained in some quarters that resales of sub-units by the public in a market recession might be an aggravating factor in a Stock Exchange slump have been completely allayed. When allowance is made for the "cushioning" effect of managements' revolving funds, used to finance the temporary holding of sub-units pending the marriage of resales with fresh purchases, the enforced liquidation of underlying securities has been an insignificant factor in the past year's stock market history.

From the standpoint, however, of managements of Unit Trusts it seems clear that the contraction in the volume of new business has involved a substantial diminution of profits. During the past year, enterprise in the formation of new trusts has been reflected in the birth of a score of applicants for public favour—evenly divided as between the rigidly or relatively fixed type and those with "flexible" powers. A notable innovation (setting aside the extension of the movement, subsequently vetoed by Treasury ban, to American securities) has been the introduction of Unit Trusts making provision for the accumulation of reserve funds—a technique tried out experimentally by the Proved Securities, Allied and (with options for sub-unit holders) by the Fifteen Moorgate groups. Enterprise, as we have shown, has been rewarded by an increment in funds which brings the movement's net accumulation of public savings to well over £80 millions; but it is questionable whether the average sales per new trusts launched have greatly exceeded £250,000—a figure inadequate to provide a management profit after flotation and advertising expenses are met, though large established groups obviously enjoy the benefit of smaller "overheads" in relation to additional trusts launched from an existing *point d'appui*.

In one recent instance difficulties of one sort or another proved to be more than a management group could surmount, and the underlying portfolios were taken over—without loss, be it noted, for the sub-unit holders—by stronger hands. This rare example of weakness in the structure of management was revealed after the movement as a whole had been seriously disconcerted by a last-moment attempt of the President of the Board of Trade to insert into the Share-Pushing Bill a clause giving his Department "blanket" powers to define, at its unlimited discretion, the conditions which should regulate not merely future, but previously concluded, Unit Trust deeds. In view of the extent to which managers had already voluntarily conformed to the recommendations of the Anderson Committee it is doubtful whether any legislative control over Unit Trusts was necessary. Eventually, however, the Bill was passed with a reasonable schedule setting forth the nature of the regulations which the Board of Trade may make. Thus defined, the permissive regulations—covering advertising, administrative expenses, trustees' powers to evict managers, and the establishment of escrow funds—do not go beyond the standards of generally accepted practice; and in relation to two controversial issues, the determination of sale price and yield, few trusts to-day fail to conform to the highest accounting principles which officialdom could seek to impose. The attempts, begun (with general press disapprobation) during the course of last winter, to stimulate sales of sub-units by offers—either direct or, even less desirably, through third parties—of sub-units at a discount, were frowned upon by the movement's responsible leaders and have been discontinued.

Having displayed its ability to weather not merely an economic depression but a war-panic, will the Unit Trust movement develop into a social force of major importance? It is a question in which an opinionatively dogmatic answer would still be premature. The proof furnished in 1937–39 that Unit Trusts are not impregnable against capital depre-

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ciation must weigh against mass participation in them by small savers; and, from managements' standpoint, the very small investor is unremunerative, since earnings' distribution costs are constant. If the movement is greatly to extend its scope, it seems probable that a separate mechanism—not simply a subsidiary of a single group—will have to be devised for the collection, on deposit-bank lines, of weekly or monthly instalments of savings, whose investment in sub-units would be the ultimate objective.

INSURANCE SHARES

Insurance shares remain true to their gilt-edged form. They still move in line with British Government stocks, which means that they have fallen in value this year, and the dividend yields returnable on the best shares vary from 3 per cent. to 3¾ per cent. So they will remain as long as the dividends are covered almost entirely by interest earnings, leaving the underwriting profits to accumulate for future capital bonuses. The following table shows the ratio of net interest earnings to the net cost of dividends and interest for some of the leading companies, together with the dividend yields at present market prices. It will be observed that the highest yields are generally obtainable from the shares of companies whose dividends are the least covered by net interest earnings:

Composite Companies	Ratio of Net Interest Earnings to Net Cost of Dividends and Interest	Divs.	High 1939	Present Middle Price	Gross Yield %
Alliance £1	79%	18/-	27½	25	£3 12 0
Alliance £20, £2 4s. paid		18/-	26	23½	£3 16 6
Commercial Union £1	67%	8/-	9½	8⅝	£4 10 9
Eagle Star 10/-	—	3/-	77/6	74/6	£4 0 9
General Accident £1, 5/- paid ...	110%	3/6	98/-	89/9	£3 18 0
London and Lancashire £5, £2 paid	88%	20/-	20½	26	£3 17 0
North British and Mercantile £1 5s.	100%	6/3	11 7/16	10½	£3 1 9
North British and Mercantile £1 5s., 6/3 paid...		6/3	11 7/16	9½	£3 3 0
Phoenix £1	85%	12/-	15½	14¾	£4 2 0
Phoenix £10, £1 paid		12/-	14 7/16	13¾	£4 6 6
Prudential "B" £1, 4/- paid ...	97%	2/- f.t.	95/-	86/3	£3 4 0
Royal Exchange £1 stock	102%	30%	9⅜	8¼	£3 8 6
Royal £1, 12/6 paid†	90%	65	8⅜	8	£4 1 3

† Bonus paid in May, 1939, representing 2/6 of amount remaining uncalled on each share, reducing uncalled liability to 7/6 per share.

Life Companies	1938 Dividend	High 1939	Present Price	Gross Yield %
‡Brittanic £1	10/- f.t.	19½	18½	£3 15 6
Legal and General £1, 5/- paid	2/3 f.t.	99/3	87/6	£3 11 0
‡Prudential "A" £1	98½% f.t.	35⅝	34½	£3 17 9
Sun Life £1	4/- f.t.	8½	7½	£3 13 6

‡ Industrial life companies.

In 1938, which was a difficult year for commercial enterprises, the net trading profits of British insurance companies were very little less than in 1937. But there are clouds on the insurance horizon. There is a steady increase in taxation and there is more and more restrictive legislation on the part of foreign countries. As regards taxation, the Chairman of the London, Liverpool and Globe declared that out of gross underwriting profits, that is, profits prior to charging any taxation, over 40 per cent. is required to satisfy the demands of the various States. In the fire and accident department, according to the Chairman of the Phoenix, rather more than 59 per cent. of the combined profits goes in taxation. With rearmament expenditure in full swing in almost every country, the burden of increasing taxation is becoming a serious problem for the composite insurance companies.

Restrictive legislation is perhaps even more alarming. Nationalism and socialism are becoming the nightmare of insurance company directors who cannot attune themselves to the new conditions of the age. In Eire insurance business has already been nationalised and the companies, including the Prudential, are handing over their assets to the new national companies. But apart from nationalisation there are many ways in which new burdens can be placed upon insurance companies by needy Governments. The Chairman of the Atlas stated that "at the moment there are no less than twenty overseas countries or States in which legislation affecting the interests of British insurance companies is pending . . . Fourteen of the proposed Bills contain, amongst other restrictions, provisions calling for the lodging of deposits or reserves, with limitations as to the class of security in which such deposits can be invested." This does not make for liquidity, which is the desideratum of investment for the composite companies.

Another cloud appeared on the insurance horizon this year—the ugly menacing cloud of war risks. As owners or mortgagees of buildings throughout the country the insurance companies are greatly concerned about war and they have perforce to be content with the Government's assurance that compensation will be paid for war damage when the war is over. But they recognise that war risks to property are probably not insurable. Apart from war and City fires and I.R.A. bombings, there is no reason to suppose that insurance companies will fare much worse in 1939. Certainly insurance shares have not lost the favour of the conservative investor.

THE A.B.C. OF ASSURANCE

On a later page there appears the analytical table of life assurance and annuity comparisons, compiled by Mr. T. Egginton Paull, which has for a number of years been a feature of The New Statesman and Nation financial supplements. Study of its statistical calculations will reveal, even to comparatively inexpert readers, the interesting variations which exist, as between different offices, in both assurance yields and annuity results. Those who are prepared to take pencil and paper, and to draw modestly on such stores of simple arithmetical knowledge as survive from their school days,

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★ Facilities for monthly payments are included in the Britannic House Purchase Service.

★ The Endowment Assurance Safeguarding Policy may be taken out "with profits." This means that a "liquid asset" in the shape of bonuses is handed over at the end of the period in addition to the deeds of the house.

★ Valuers' fees and Solicitors' costs for the preparation of the mortgage are defrayed by the Company.

★ To those not intending to purchase a house immediately the Britannic Deferred Advance Scheme makes an attractive appeal.

BRITANNIC ASSURANCE Co., Ltd.

Established 1866

Broad Street Corner, BIRMINGHAM, 1

will be able readily to satisfy themselves that the working of compound interest is in general very beneficent for policy-holders. It may well be, however, that to some readers the field of life assurance is an intellectual jungle inhabited by ferocious technicalities. On this assumption it has been thought opportune to add a few notes setting out, in the form of simple definition and explanation, some of the many varied forms of assurance calculated to make the widest appeal. The list makes no pretensions, of course, to be a comprehensive catalogue.

1. Whole Life Assurance.

Whole life policies, as their name implies, mature not—as is the case with Endowment Assurance (*q.v.*)—at death or the end of a specified period, but solely on the policy-holder's death. They are, therefore, primarily a protection for dependents, rather than a medium for savings against old age. But it should be borne in mind that options can usually be secured in whole life policies, entitling the holders to convert them into policies with a fixed date of maturity, either with the same premium and a reduced sum assured, as with the same sum assured and an increased ratio of premium. Alternatively, the assured can always surrender a whole life policy for cash at its surrender value, or it can be mortgaged against a loan. Its obvious advantage is that it provides, if it is on a " without profits " basis, the maximum immediate cover against the risk of death. Policies " with profits " are naturally more costly per £100 assured ; but, if past experience is maintained, they are more advantageous contracts for the insured in the long run. Whether " with " or " without " profit bonuses, a whole life policy is admirably suited for a young man as his first step in assurance.

2. Endowment Assurance.

An endowment policy, which can likewise be effected either with or without profit bonuses, becomes payable at death or on the expiry of an agreed period of years. The shorter the period, the higher, naturally, is the premium per £100 assured. Such policies, particularly if used to supplement a whole-life policy taken out in youth at cheap rates, provide a useful, systematic method of saving. Provision for retirement is being steadily made, while cover—albeit on a smaller scale, as compared with whole life policies, per unit of premium—is at the time secured for dependents in the event of premature death.

3. Short Term Assurances.

Policies are issued contracting for the payment of a fixed sum in the event of the death of the assured within a stipulated period, ranging—with obvious gradations of premium—from one to fifteen years. This is the cheapest form of assurance from the angle of premium payable, since the assurance is covering a contingency and not (as is the types of policy described above) an eventual certainty of claim. For example, a man of 40 can be assured for £1,000 in the event of death within 15 years for an annual premium of £15, as compared with over £25 for a whole life assurance of that sum. And for younger men or briefer periods the premium rate is naturally still lower. If the assured survives, he loses, of course, the investment attraction of whole life or endowment policies.

Short term policies are normally useful to cover risk of death before a specified liability—a loan or building society advance, for example—is liquidated, or before education of a child is completed. Their relevance to war risks is also worth considering for those with dependants. For instance, a man of 30 can assure his life to the tune of £1,000 for three years for about £7 10*s.* a year, and short term policies can usually be secured with options to convert into whole life or endowment policies.

4. Family Provision Assurance.

Policies are issued by most companies which are designed not merely to provide dependants with a capital sum in the event of the assured's death, but to secure for them a specified income for a stated period—an arrangement of obvious benefit to a widow left with young children. For example, by paying a premium not greatly in excess of that required for a " without profits " whole life £1,000 policy, a married man of 30, with children to educate, can secure a policy providing that, if he dies before the age of 50 (when his children will be adult) his widow shall receive £250 on his death, £150 a year for the remainder of the 20 years' period unexpired on his death, and a final sum of £750 in the year when the deceased would have been 50, if he had lived. Such policies can very suitably be combined with Educational policies taken out on the birth of child, providing for guaranteed annual sums to cover school years or a lump sum in the event of the father's death.

* * *

The truism that nearly all British citizens in the £300—£3,000 a year " earned income " class are grossly under-assured scarcely needs repetition. The capital value to his dependants of a living man whose salary is £1,000 a year is at least £25,000, taking an optimistic view of the interest rate which can be obtained with reasonable security on investments and the differential tax on unearned income. Dead, few " thousand a year " men " cut up " for more than a fraction of that capital value ; the proportion of the middle-class which is in possession of substantial accumulated assets is small. Yet all too many who live at that rate of income consider that their families are adequately protected by assurance for a sum representing one year's pre-demise expenditure. This is " taking a chance on longevity " which is wholly unfair to dependants. Obviously, human nature being as it is, consumption of cake cannot be cut down beyond certain limits in order to provide for a contingency which we are all loth to contemplate. But the balance between current enjoyment and security certainly needs to be tipped by most people in the direction of greater prudence. The assurance companies, it will be agreed, have devised contracts whose variety, illustrated by the examples given above, should meet most individuals' personal circumstances.

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A PRACTICAL TEST

Chief Offices : High Holborn, London, W.C.I.

A practical test of insurance service is 'performance.' For over seventy years the Pearl Assurance Company Limited has transacted Insurance business and, during that time, has paid claims exceeding a sum of

£126,000,000

Assets exceed £107,000,000

President and Chairman : Sir George Tilley, F.C.I.I.

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COMPANY, LIMITED

SECURITY!

Life has a sense of firm foundation to those who have **SAFEGUARDED** the future.

PROTECT your dependents and PROVIDE for retirement by a REFUGE POLICY

ASSETS - - **£71,100,000**

REFUGE ASSURANCE COMPANY LIMITED

OXFORD STREET, MANCHESTER, 1.

LIFE ASSURANCE AND ANNUITY COMPARISONS

See introductory note on page 120

ENDOWMENT ASSURANCE, maturing at age 60. Age 30 at entry

WHOLE LIFE ASSURANCE, Claim (assumed) age 65. Age 30 at entry

ANNUITY [payable half-yearly], without proportion from last payment to date of death, for £100 purchase price

Based on Annual Premium £10

Company	Sum assured and Bonus Maturing 1939 (1)	Sum assured Non-profit present rates (2)	Sum assured with Profit Policy at issue now (3)	Sum assured and Bonus assuming claim in 1939 (4)	Sum assured Non-profit present rates (5)	Sum assured with Profit Policy at issue now (6)	Age attained, 60: Man (7)	Age attained, 60: Woman (8)	Age attained, 65: Man (9)	Age attained, 65: Woman (10)
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Alliance	466	374	285	681	582	407	8 2 5	7 0 7	9 11 9	8 3 9
Atlas	463	390	284	686	612	415	8 6 4	7 4 4	9 15 4	8 7 4
Australian Mutual Provident	524	376	301	865	603	415	7 19 6*fh*	6 17 5*fh*	9 9 1*fh*	8 0 8*fh*
Beacon (Abstainers)	429	374	298	707	599	458	8 5 2	7 2 10	9 14 10	8 6 4
Beacon (General)	412	368	293	614	566	434	8 5 2	7 2 10	9 14 10	8 6 4
Britannic	432	380	289	676	585	417	8 0 10	6 19 2	9 9 10	8 2 2
British Equitable	423	369	287	583	563	417	8 3 4	7 1 5	9 12 9	8 4 8
British General	*a*	376	296	*a*	571	405	8 2 10	7 0 7	9 12 5	8 4 0
Caledonian	460	384	296	627	615	413	8 6 1	7 4 2	9 15 6	8 7 4
Canada Life	431	390	302	631	591	413	7 17 8	6 16 6	9 6 2	7 18 11
Clerical, Medical & General	*a*	375	268	731	594	420	8 5 4	7 2 10	9 15 6	8 6 8
Colonial Mutual	481	384	291	685	597	410	8 3 6	7 1 6	9 13 0	8 4 10
Commercial Union	477	375	299	722	571	432	8 2 10	7 0 7	9 12 5	8 4 0
Confederation	*b*	389	284	*b*	585	402	7 16 8	6 15 2	9 5 6	7 18 2
Co-operative	*a*	372	296	*a*	609	427	8 4 0*f*	7 2 4*f*	9 12 8*f*	8 5 0*f*
Crown Life	*b*	383	348	*b*	573	498	7 16 8	6 15 2	9 5 6	7 18 2
Eagle Star	*a*	375	286	*a*	583	418	8 3 10	7 1 6	9 14 0	8 5 4
Equitable	506	400*m*	298	*b*	*c*	*b*	8 6 5	7 2 6	9 18 0	8 7 5
Equity & Law	475	379	298	694	596	428	8 6 4	7 4 4	9 15 4	8 7 4
Friends' Provident & Century	448	376	287	679	584	417	8 6 4	7 4 4	9 15 4	8 7 4
General	*b*	364	284	*b*	581	407	8 5 4	7 3 6	9 14 6	8 6 6
Gresham	454	376	302	635	584	429	8 6 4	7 4 4	9 15 4	8 7 4
Guardian	480	382	291	698	607	409	8 3 10	7 1 6	9 14 0	8 5 4
Ideal	509	391	310	754	617	470	8 0 7	6 18 8	9 10 2	8 2 0
Imperial Life of Canada	*b*	*c*	304	*b*	*c*	433	7 16 8	6 15 2	9 5 6	7 18 2
Law Union & Rock	452	368	281	684	567	406	8 2 8	7 0 10	9 12 0	8 4 0
Legal & General	509	376	287	733	583	417	8 6 4	7 4 4	9 15 4	8 7 4
Life Association of Scotland	*b*	386	297	*b*	596	409	8 4 4	7 2 2	9 13 10	8 5 8
Liverpool, London & Globe	451	377	289	682	603	405	8 1 4	6 18 8	9 11 6	8 2 6
London & Manchester	450	380	296	650	588	426	8 2 10	7 0 5	9 13 0	8 3 11
London & Scottish	402	379	293	567	609	410	*l*	*l*	*l*	*l*
London Assurance	*a*	391	287	*a*	600	409	8 3 10	7 1 4	9 14 0	8 5 2
London Life	*b*	400	305	*b*	633	463	8 2 4	7 0 0	9 12 0	8 3 7
Manufacturers Life	*a*	381	345	*a*	617	501	7 16 8	6 15 2	9 5 6	7 18 2
Marine & General	453	375	292	675	584	413	8 5 6	7 3 6	9 14 6	8 6 6
Mutual Life & Citizens	527	382	311	863	637	410	7 19 0*fh*	6 17 8*fh*	9 8 0*fh*	8 0 4*fh*
National Mutual of Australasia	524	383	314	822	612	428	8 5 10	7 3 6	9 15 8	8 7 2
National Mutual	519	371	284	801	605	407	8 5 4	7 3 6	9 14 6	8 6 6
National Provident	481	385	285	685	600	410	8 5 4	7 3 2	9 15 0	8 6 6
North British & Mercantile	438	383	291	647	584	401	8 3 6	7 1 0	9 13 8	8 4 10
Northern	437	375	289	632	583	410	8 3 7	7 1 1	9 13 4	8 4 7
Norwich Union	448	377	297	660	581	414	8 1 9	7 0 0	9 10 10	8 3 0
Pearl	432	375	292	637	561	430	8 1 10	6 19 6	9 11 8	8 3 2
Phoenix	447	375	275	663	584	384	8 1 10	7 0 10	9 12 2	8 4 4
Provident Association of London	446	352	295	676	496	410	8 13 2	7 10 10	10 2 10	8 14 2
Provident Mutual	429	363	295	686	521	410	8 6 4	7 4 4	9 15 4	8 7 4
Prudential (*United Kingdom Rates*)	436	376	286	665	587	413	8 2 6	7 0 8	9 11 10	8 3 10
Refuge	450	377	291	609	600	432	8 0 11	6 19 3	9 9 10	8 2 2
Royal Exchange	450	376	286	676	568	407	8 3 4	7 1 5	9 12 9	8 4 8
Royal	455	380	282	655	594	408	8 1 8	6 18 8	9 12 0	8 3 0
Royal London	439	369	289	*a*	571	419	8 0 0*g*	7 0 0*g*	9 12 0*g*	8 0 0*g*
Scottish Amicable	497	390	284	721	588	399	8 1 8	6 19 8	9 11 0	8 3 0
Scottish Equitable	455	382	288	657	591	408	8 3 10	7 1 6	9 14 0	8 5 4
Scottish Insurance Corporation	421	372	297	602	571	417	8 1 8	6 19 8	9 11 0	8 3 0
Scottish Life	444	374	291	657	580	419	8 6 2	7 4 2	9 15 6	8 7 4
Scottish Provident	440	396	281	679*j*	598	568*j*	8 1 10	6 19 5	9 11 11	8 3 4
Scottish Temperance & Gen. (Abs.)	462	386	309	787	612	458	8 4 3	7 2 2	9 13 10	8 5 6
Scottish Temperance & Gen. (Gen.)	444	373	297	708	581	412	8 4 3	7 2 2	9 13 10	8 5 6
Scottish Union & National	424	375	281	596	582	409	8 3 10	7 1 6	9 14 0	8 5 4
Scottish Widows	470	364	281	680	569	397	8 2 6	7 0 6	9 12 0	8 3 10
Southern Life	489	391	297	702	652	431	8 11 6	7 9 2	10 1 2	8 12 6
Standard	464	386	286	676	599	410	8 1 4	6 18 8	9 11 6	8 2 6
Sun of Canada	460	380	293	678	591	413	7 16 8	6 15 2	9 5 6	7 18 2
Sun	432	*k*	296	632	566	407	8 0 8	6 18 8	9 10 4	8 2 4
United Kingdom (Abs.)	476	393	289	737	628	426	8 2 8	7 0 10	9 12 0	8 4 0
United Kingdom (Gen.)	467	382	289	696	597	426	8 2 8	7 0 10	9 12 0	8 4 0
Wesleyan & General	429	376	295	650	577	426	8 7 4	7 5 6	9 16 2	8 8 4
Yorkshire	478	379	285	693	591	417	8 2 6	7 0 8	9 11 10	8 4 0

a Normal with profit reversionary bonus policies not in force for this period. *b* Figures unavailable at present. *c* This contract not issued. *f* Payable quarterly. *g* With proportion from last payment to date of death. *h* Stamp duty payable by proposer. *j* Distinctive system. *k* Not published. *l* Under revision. *m* Minor profits.

[Prepared by T. Eggington Paull.]

See introduction to this table on page 120

A.M.P

THE LARGEST BRITISH MUTUAL LIFE OFFICE

ASSETS EXCEED £117,000,000

The Society transacts all classes of Life Assurance

BONUSES DISTRIBUTED ANNUALLY

Actual Examples of Endowment Assurance Policies which matured in 1938

Policy No.	Age next Birthday at Entry	Term of Years	Annual Premium	Sum Assured at Issue	Sum Assured and Bonuses at Maturity Paid Free of Tax	Total Premiums Paid
959825	**27**	**23**	**£4-2-4**	**£100**	**£148-14-0**	**£94-13-8**
703920	**36**	**20**	**£12-7-4**	**£250**	**£363-12-0**	**£247-6-8**
701666	**34**	**26**	**£7-19-4**	**£200**	**£323-16-0**	**£207-2-8**

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AUSTRALIAN MUTUAL PROVIDENT SOCIETY

Established 1849 in Australia

London Branch: 73-76 KING WILLIAM ST., LONDON, E.C.4

HOLIDAY SUGGESTIONS
—continued from page 101

Scotland

EDINBURGH GUEST HOUSE. Central. Excellent cuisine. From 7*s.* 6*d.* nightly; from 63*s.* weekly. 45 Manor Place. Tel.: 204191.

EDINBURGH. Manor Hotel, 50 Manor Place. Small, quiet, comfortable, modern. Terms from 13*s.* 6*d.* per day. Reduction per week. Tel.: 228191.

Foreign

SWITZERLAND, SCHWYZ. Hotel Sonnenberg for sunshine, health and pleasure Excellent cookery, all diets. Unrivalled view. Typical Swiss countryside. Trips arranged. Terms from £2 15*s.* per. week. All inclusive.

RIVIERA. HOTEL DE LA MER, Cap Martin. Facing full south in own grounds direct on Sea. Buses to Menton and Monte Carlo. Pension 7*s.* inclusive.

SWITZERLAND, LUGANO. Hotel Quisisana for every comfort. Beautiful gardens. Excellent cuisine. All diets. Swimming-pool. Terms 9–12 Sw. Francs.

PARIS Vme, Hotel and Pension Alger. 8 rue des Fossés-St. Jacques. Central; heart Latin Quarter. Good rooms from 15 *frs.* daily; special monthly terms.

PRALOGNAN, Savoie. Alpes, alt. 4,800ft. Hotel de la Vanoise. Pension 62–70 fs. Excellente cave. Cuisine du pays. Eau courante. Promenades. Alpinisme.

PROF. J. B. S. HALDANE, F.R.S. conducts personally party of scientists and those interested in science to the Soviet Union on Sept. 9. The party will visit scientific institutions and interview leading Soviet scientists. An opportunity of a lifetime. Inc. price £23. Party returns London Oct. 1st. Strictly limited number of places. Write Prospect Tours, Ltd., 115 Shaftesbury Ave., W.C.2.

ILE DE RE, off the Biscay coast affords ideal unconventional holiday. Parties leave every Friday night. Special party for grape harvest leaves Sept. 15 (16 days £8 8*s* inc.). Particulars from Prospect Tours, Ltd., 115 Shaftesbury Ave., W.C.2.

GERARDMER. Magnificent mountain scenery, beautiful lakes; party leaves London July 21st. Bookings accepted until next Monday (16 days, £9 15*s.*). Prospect Tours, Ltd., 115 Shaftesbury Ave, W.C.2.

SPECIALIST SUMMER TOURS TO U.S.S.R. for Educationists, Psychologists and Doctors. Dates and prices from Society for Cultural Relations, 98 Gower Street, London, W.C.1. (EUSton 2315.)

SOUTH OF FRANCE. JOIN SMALL GROUP GOING TO CASSIS-SUR-MER, unspoilt fishing village. Bathing, basking, open-air cafés. Fortnight beginning Aug. £15. Box 5370.

TRAINING CENTRES

THE BEDFORD PHYSICAL TRAINING COLLEGE, 37 Lansdowne Road, Bedford. Principal: MISS STANSFELD. Students are trained in this College to become teachers of gymnastics. The course of Training extends over 3 years and includes Educational and Medical Gymnastics, Massage, Dancing, Hockey, Lacrosse, Cricket, Tennis, Netball, etc. Fee £165 per annum. For prospectus apply SECRETARY.

A DEGREE is possible for YOU. Now that Candidates for a London Degree who are 23 or over may take the shorter Special Entrance Exam. instead of Matriculation, the way to a Degree is easier. 935 Wolsey Hall students have passed the London Special Entrance Examination.—Free Guide to London Univ. Degrees and particulars of Home Study Courses from DIRECTOR OF STUDIES, Dept. VH902, WOLSEY HALL, OXFORD.

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(University of London)
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Evening Courses for the Degrees of the University of London in the
FACULTIES OF ARTS AND SCIENCE.
Courses in Classics and in French, English, German and Italian Literature and Language.
Open to Non-University Students.
Studentships to the value of over £800 are awarded annually to students of the College.
Calendar, 1*s.*; by post, 1*s.* 4*d.* Prospectus free.
For full particulars apply to the SECRETARY:
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CITY OF LONDON COLLEGE, Ropemaker Street, London, E.C.2. (Telephone: METropolitan 2433 34.) Patron, H.M. The King. Intensive six months' training for women of good education who wish to qualify as private secretaries. Fee—thirty guineas.

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CHISWICK. Tenant leaving after 3 years recommends furnished rooms in charming old-world private house. Service, garden, mooring rights, near tennis, golf. Chiswick 0160.

KNIGHTSBRIDGE, Montpelier Street. Well furnished sitting-room and bedroom, H. & C., with breakfast, first floor. Write Box 5475.

FURNISHED and unfurnished rooms in quiet pleasant house. Meals if required. 18*s.* 6*d.* to 32*s.* 6*d.* 22 Belsize Avenue, N.W.3. Primrose 1043.

HYDE PARK. 82 Sussex Gardens, W.2. Ambassador 2941. H. and c. basins. 5*s.* 6*d.* nightly with breakfast, from 23*s.* 6*d.* weekly.

HOLLAND PARK. Modern rooms with breakfast, 25*s.* Constant hot water. Quiet house. 1 min. Central London Tube. 19 Clarendon Road. Park 7016.

ETON AVENUE. Swiss Cottage. Guest House with an International Atmosphere. Good Food. Single and dble. rooms. 2 *gns.* incl. PRI. 6466.

VACANCY for two men at 91 Greencroft Gardens, N.W.6. Single rooms. Maida Vale 1951.

YORK HOUSE, 30 Sandwich Street, W.C.1. Residential club for professional women. Every modern convenience. Many rooms with own bathrooms. Charges, £2 5*s.*–£2 10*s.* Partial board. Opening September. Apply, the Secretary.

COMFORTABLE Rooms and good food in attractive house in the Chilterns. Convenient for London and Oxford. Beacon Cottage, Aston Rowant, Oxford. Kingston Blount 219.

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W.8, Palace Gardens Terrace. Large furnished room, use kitchen, light, baths, 25*s.* Suit professional woman. BAYSwater 1428.

CHARMING BIJOU GUEST HOUSE, newly decorated and furnished. Hot and cold. Garden. Rooms, including breakfast, dinner, bath, light, 2 *guineas* weekly. Few minutes Marble Arch and near tube station. 80 Maida Vale, W.9. Mai. 1930.

JORDANS. Permanent paying guest wanted in quiet, comfortable cottage. "Elcot," Jordans, Beaconsfield.

BELSIZE PARK. Attractive bed-sitting rooms. Good food; reasonable prices. Apply in evening. SHIPHAM, 44 Glenloch Road, N.W.3.

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LARGE, furnished, re-decorated studio room. 17*s.* 6*d.* Or double; kitchen, garden; private house. Also studio. PRImrose 6534.

ATTRACTIVE Room; modern conveniences; small cultured family. Russian or German tuition if desired. Ring Maida Vale 6325.

HAMPSTEAD. Bed-sitting room in well-appointed house; business man. H. and c., nr. L.M.S., 'buses, tube and heath. Ham. 3654.

IS it possible? An inoffensively furnished room with progressive people; near city; moderate terms. Write Box 5590.

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LECTURE room (seating 80) available for social meetings, lectures, pupils' concerts, etc. For terms, apply SECRETARY, 34 Nottingham Place, W.1.

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MISS J. D. WALLINGTON (and Mrs. Helen Whitticom), Health Practitioner, Osteopath, and Bonesetter, treats all conditions of ill-health by natural methods. Consultations by appointment. 1 Ashley Place, S.W.1. Tel.: Victoria 0131; and 2 Norton Way North, Letchworth. Tel.: Letchworth 885.

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FACTORY GIRLS' COUNTRY HOLIDAY FUND. Chairman, Lady Loch. FUNDS URGENTLY NEEDED. Hundreds of the poorest working girls and women hoping for a week or more at the sea during the next few weeks.—Gifts thankfully acknowledged by the Hon. Treasurer, Mrs. Slater, or Miss Canney, M.B.E., 36 Red Lion Street, Bedford Row, W.C.1.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS
Rates and all information on page 99

HOUSES, FLATS, PROPERTY, etc.
For Sale, To Let and Wanted

A GENUINE OLD PRIORY. 42 miles from London (L.N.E.R.). Also bus service from King's Cross. Vaulted roof, oak beams, king post, XVth century wall paintings. 4 reception, 5 bedrooms, offices. Central heating. Main water, drainage, gas, electricity. Large garden. Freehold, £2,350. Or might let. The Priory, Thaxted, Essex. 'Phone: 245.

FOR SALE. AUTHOR'S HOME, N. WALES. In own grounds, 4 acres. 6 bedrooms, dining rooms, music room, bathroom, 2 w.c.s. H. and c., central heating, wired for light. Tennis lawn, orchard, well treed, trout fishing in grounds, stables, loft, kit. gardens. Low rates. Own water supply. Secluded, quiet, out of danger area. £1,600 quick sale. Box 5605.

NORTH CORNWALL. Furnished cottage to let, on farm. Three double bedrooms, bath, hot and cold, indoor sanitation. Garage. Quiet surroundings; beautiful coast. Box 5306.

TO BE SOLD, or let for long period, old furnished cottage on N. Devon coast. 4 bedrooms (sleep 6) large living room, kitchen, bathroom, 2 W.C.s, garage, small but productive garden. Remote but not isolated. BORRER, Queens House, Linton, Cambs.

HERTFORDSHIRE, furnished cottage, to let, four weeks from 22nd July. Box 5655

THREE miles Old Amersham, Bucks. Converted old-world house, in heart of delightful Penn country, in quarter acre of ground, attractively furnished. Three bedrooms, sleep five. Eight with extra beds. Two living rooms. Old-world fireplaces. Sun-balcony. C.H.W. Kit. elect. cooker. Bath, indoor sanitation. Terms: 4 *gns.* weekly August. Box 5618.

IN OLD-WORLD CHELSEA
A NEWLY-BUILT and unique modern PRIVATE RESIDENCE, complete with all domestic requirements. Central heating. Entrance hall, 2 rec., 6 bed., 2 bathrooms, etc. FREEHOLD, £3,750, or would be let.—Apply UFFINDELL, 46, Grosvenor Gardens, S.W.1. SLOane 9881.

COUNTRY HOLIDAYS, LTD. offer you an attractive home on their BYGRAVE MANOR ESTATE, BALDOCK—38 miles from London. Modern houses and bungalows to let with 2–3 bedrooms, large gardens, electric light, main drainage, company's water. Rents from 16*s.* 6*d.* to 22*s.* 6*d.* weekly, inclusive of rates. OPTIONAL PURCHASE. Apply Major N. S. FITCH, at estate office as above.

SUSSEX. One hour from London. Tudor Farm House: furnished. Beautifully secluded under downs, yet convenient; four bedrooms, bath (hot and cold); indoor sanitation. 4–5 months, beginning August. LOHRKE, Hurstpierpoint, Sussex.

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LECTURES AND MEETINGS

THE ETHICAL CHURCH, Queensway, Bayswater, W.2. Sunday, July 16, at 11 a.m., H. J. BLACKHAM: "THE STRUCTURE OF HUMAN CHARACTER." 7 p.m., MRS. FLEMMING: "MISERABLE SINNERS." (Friends and Members' Supper at 8.30.)

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Holborn. Sunday, July 16th, at 11 a.m., Professor Susan Stebbing, M.A., D.Lit.: "Ideals and Illusions." Admission free. Visitors welcome.

LECTURES on Yoga and Mysticism at 30 Lansdowne Crescent, W.11. (Bus 52 to Ladbroke Gardens.) Wednesdays 6.15, Fridays 8.15, by H. P. SHASTRI. These lectures finish July 28th, recommencing Friday, September 8th.

DR. ELIZABETH HILL on "Russian and Soviet Literature," Fri., 21st July, at 8 p.m. S.C.R., 98 Gower Street, W.C.1.

SUMMER SCHOOLS

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Full particulars from the Howard League for Penal Reform, Parliament Mansions, Victoria Street, London, S.W.1.

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